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A GOOD FIGHT,

AND OTHER TALES.

BY CHARLES READE,

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"LOVE ME LITTLE, LOVE ME LONG," "PEG WOFFINGTON,"

"CHRISTIE JOHNSTONE," &c., &c.

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A GOOD FIGHT.
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A THIEF.
JACK OF ALL TRADES.

A GOOD FIGHT.

CHAPTER I.

Nor a day passes over the earth but men and women of no note do great deeds, speak great words, and suffer noble sorrows. Of these obscure heroes, philosophers, and martyrs, the greater part will never be known till that day, when many that are great shall be small, and the small great: but of others the world's knowledge may be said to sleep. Their lives and characters lie hidden from nations in the very annals that record them. The general reader can not feel them, they are presented so curtly and coldly: they are not like breathing stories appealing to his heart, but little historic hailstones striking him only to glance off his bosom: nor can he understand them; for epitomes are not narratives, as skeletons are not human figures.

Thus records of prime truths sometimes remain a dead letter to plain folk; the writers have left so much to the imagination, and imagination is so rare a gift. Here, then, the writer of fiction may be of use to the public—as an interpreter.

There is a musty chronicle, written in tolerable Latin, and in it a chapter where every sentence holds a fact. Here is told, with harsh brevity, the strange history of a pair, who lived untrumpeted, and died unsung, four hundred years ago; and lie now, as unpitied, in that stern page, as fossils in a rock. Thus, living or dead, fate is still unjust to them. Yet if I can but show you what is involved in that dry chronicler's words, methinks

you will correct the indifference of centuries, and give those sore-tried souls a place in your heart—for a few weeks.

It was past the middle of the fifteenth century, Louis XI. was sovereign of France; Edward IV. was wrongful King of England; and Philip "the Good," having by force and cunning dispossessed his cousin Jacqueline, and broken her heart, reigned undisturbed this many years in Holland, where our tale begins.

Gerard, and Catherine his wife, lived in the little town of Tergou. He traded, wholesale and retail, in cloth, silk, brown holland, and, above all, in curried leather, a material highly valued by the middling people, because it would stand twenty years' wear, and turn a knife if not fresh sharpened; no small virtue in a jerkin of that century, in which folk were so liberal of their steel: even at dinner a man would leave his meat awhile, and carve you his neighbor, on a very moderate difference of opinion.

The couple were well to do, and would have been free from all earthly care, but for nine children. When these were coming into the world, one per annum, each was hailed with rejoicings, and the Saints were thanked, not expostulated with; and when parents and children were all young together, the latter were looked upon as lovely little playthings invented by Heaven for the amusement, joy, and evening solace, of people in business.

But as the olive branches shot up, and the parents grew older, and saw with their own eyes the fate of large families, misgivings and care mingled with their love. They belonged to a singularly wise and provident people: in Holland reckless parents were as rare as disobedient children. So now when the huge loaf came in on a gigantic trencher, looking like a fortress in its moat, and, the tour of the table once made, seemed to have melted away, Gerard and Catherine would look at one

another and say, "Who is to find bread for them all when we are gone?"

At this observation the younger ones needed all their filial respect, to keep their little Dutch countenances; for in their humble opinion dinner and supper came by nature like sunrise and sunset, and, so long as that luminary should travel round the earth, so long *must* the brown loaf go round their family circle, and set in their stomachs only to rise again in the family oven. But the remark awakened the national thoughtfulness of the elder boys, and being often repeated set several of the family thinking, some of them good thoughts, some ill thoughts, according to the nature of the thinkers.

"Kate, the children grow so, this table will soon be too small."

"We can not afford it, Gerard," replied Catherine, answering not his words, but his thought, after the manner of women.

Their anxiety for the future took at times a less dismal but more mortifying turn. The free burghers had their pride as well as the nobles; and these two could not bear that any of their blood should go down in the burgh after their decease.

So by prudence and self-denial they managed to clothe all the little bodies, and feed all the great mouths, and yet put by a small hoard to meet the future; and, as it grew, and grew, they felt a pleasure the miser hoarding for himself knows not.

One day the eldest boy but one, aged nineteen, came to his mother, and, with that outward composure which has so misled some persons as to the real nature of this people, begged her to intercede with his father to send him to Amsterdam, and place him with a merchant. "It is the way of life that likes me: merchants are wealthy; I am good at numbers; prithee, good mother, take my part in this, and I shall ever be, as I am now, your debtor."

Catherine threw up her hands with dismay and incredulity. "What, leave Tergou!"

"What is one street to me more than another? If I can leave the folk of Tergou, I can surely leave the stones."

"What! abandon your poor father now he is no longer young?"

"Mother, if I can leave you, I can leave him."

"What, leave your poor brothers and sisters, that love you so dear?"

"There are enough in the house without me."

"What mean you, Richart? Who is more thought of than you? Stay, have I spoken sharp to you? Have I been unkind to you?"

"Never that I know of; and if you had, you should never hear of it from me. Mother," said Richart gravely, but the tear was in his eye, "it all lies in a word. And nothing can change my mind. There will be one mouth less for you to feed."

"There now, see what my tongue has done," said Catherine, and the next moment she began to cry. For she saw her first young bird on the edge of the nest trying his wings, to fly into the world. Richart had a calm, strong will, and she knew he never wasted a word.

It ended as nature has willed all such discourse shall end: young Richart went to Amsterdam with a face so long and sad as it had never been seen before, and a heart like granite.

That afternoon at supper there was one mouth less. Catherine looked at Richart's chair and wept bitterly. On this Gerard shouted roughly and angrily to the children, "sit wider! can't ye: sit wider!" and turned his head away over the back of his seat awhile, and was silent.

Richart was launched; and never cost them another penny: but to fit him out and place him in the house of Vander Stegen the merchant took all the little hoard but

one gold crown. They began again. Two years passed. Richart found a niche in commerce for his brother Jacob, and Jacob left Tergou directly after dinner, which was at eleven in the forenoon. At supper that day Gerard remembered what had happened the last time; so he said in a low whisper, "sit wider, dears!" Now until that moment, Catherine *would* not see the gap at table, for her daughter Catherine had besought her not to grieve to-night and she had said, "No, sweetheart, I promise I will not, since it vexes my children." But when Gerard whispered "sit wider!" says she "Ay! the table will soon be too big for the children: and you thought it would be too small:" and having delivered this with forced calmness, she put up her apron the next moment, and wept sore.

"'Tis the best that leave us," sobbed she, "that is the cruel part."

"Nay! nay!" said Gerard, "our children are good children, and all are dear to us alike. Heed her not! What God takes from us still seems better than what he spares to us: that is to say, men are by nature unthankful—and women silly."

"And I say Richart and Jacob were the flower of the flock," sobbed Catherine.

The little coffer was empty again, and to fill it they gathered like ants. In those days speculation was pretty much confined to the card-and-dice business. Gerard knew no way to wealth but the slow and sure one. "A penny saved is a penny gained," was his humble creed. All that was not required for the business, and the necessities of life, went into the little coffer with steel bands and florid key. They denied themselves in turn the humblest luxuries, and then, catching one another's looks, smiled; perhaps with a greater joy than self-indulgence has to bestow. And so in three years more they had gleaned enough to set up their fourth son as a master tailor, and their eldest daughter as a robe-maker, in

Tergou. Here were two more provided for: their own trade would enable them to throw work into the hands of this pair. But the coffer was drained to the dregs, and this time the shop too bled a little in goods if not in coin.

Alas! there remained on hand two that were unable to get their bread, and two that were unwilling. The unable ones were, 1, Giles, a dwarf, of the wrong sort, half stupidity half malice, all head and claws and voice, run from by dogs and unprejudiced females, and sided with through thick and thin by his mother; 2, Little Catherine, a poor girl that could only move on crutches. She lived in pain, but smiled through it, with her marble face and violet eyes and long silky lashes: and fretful or repining word never came from her lips. The unwilling ones were Sybrandt, the youngest, a ne'er-do-weel, too much in love with play to work, and Cornelis, the eldest, who had made calculations of his own, and stuck to the hearth, waiting for dead men's shoes. Almost worn out by their repeated efforts, and above all dispirited by the moral and physical infirmities of those that now remained on hand, the anxious couple would often say, "What will become of all these when we shall be no longer here to take care of them?" But when they had said this a good many times, suddenly the domestic horizon cleared, and then they used still to say it, because a habit is a habit, but they uttered it half mechanically now instead of despondently, and added brightly and cheerfully, "but thanks to St. Bavon and all the saints, there's Gerard!!"

CHAPTER II.

YOUNG Gerard was for many years of his life a son apart and distinct; object of no fears and no great hopes. No fears; for he was going into the Church; and the

Church could always maintain her children by hook or by crook in those days: no great hopes, because his family had no interest with the great to get him a benefice, and the young man's own habits were frivolous, and, indeed, such as our cloth merchant would not have put up with in any one but a clerk that was to be. His two main trivialities were reading and penmanship, and he was so wrapped up in them that often he could hardly be got away to his meals. The day was never long enough for him: and he carried ever a tinder-box and brimstone matches, and begged ends of candles of the neighbors, which he lighted at unreasonable hours—ay, even at eight of the clock at night in winter, when the very Burgomaster was abed. Endured at home, his practices were encouraged by the monks of a neighboring convent. They had taught him penmanship, and continued to teach him, until one day they discovered, in the middle of a lesson, that he was teaching them. They pointed this out to him in a merry way: he hung his head and blushed: he had suspected as much himself, but mistrusted his judgment in that matter. “But, my son,” said an elderly monk, “how is it that you, to whom God has given an eye so true, a hand so supple yet firm, and a love of these beautiful crafts, how is it you do not color as well as write? a scroll looks but barren unless a border of fruit, and leaves, and rich arabesques surround the good words, and charm the sense as those do the soul and understanding; to say nothing of the pictures of holy men and women departed, with which the several chapters should be adorned, and not alone the eye soothed with the brave and sweetly blended colors, but the heart lifted by effigies of the Saints in glory. Answer me, my son.”

At this Gerard was confused, and muttered that he had made several trials at illuminating, but had not succeeded well; and thus the matter rested.

Soon after this a fellow-enthusiast came on the scene

in the unwonted form of an old lady. Margaret, sister and survivor of the brothers Van Eyck, left Flanders, and came to end her days in her native country. She bought a small house near Tergou. In course of time she heard of Gerard, and saw some of his handiwork; it pleased her so well that she sent her female servant, Richt Heynes, to ask him to come to her. This led to an acquaintance: it could hardly be otherwise, for little Tergou had never held so many as two zealots of this sort before. At first the old lady damped Gerard's courage terribly. At each visit she pulled out of holes and corners drawings and paintings, some of them by her own hand, that seemed to him unapproachable; but if the artist overpowered him, the woman kept his heart up. She and Richt soon turned him inside out like a glove. Among other things, they drew from him what the good monks had failed to hit upon, the reason why he did not illuminate, viz., that he could not afford the gold, the blue, and the red, but only the cheap earths; and that he was afraid to ask his mother to buy the choice colors, and was sure he should ask her in vain. Then Margaret Van Eyck gave him a little brush-gold, and some vermilion, and ultramarine, and a piece of good vellum to lay them on. He almost adored her. As he left the house Richt ran after him with a candle and two quarters: he quite kissed her. But better even than the gold and lapis lazuli to the illuminator was the sympathy to the isolated enthusiast. That sympathy was always ready, and, as he returned it, an affection sprung up between the old painter and the young calligrapher that was doubly characteristic of the time. For this was a century in which the fine arts and the higher mechanical arts were not separated by any distinct boundary, nor were those who practiced them: and it was an age in which artists sought out and loved one another. Should this last statement stagger a painter or writer of our day, let me remind him that Christians loved one another at first starting.

Backed by an acquaintance so venerable, and strengthened by female sympathy, Gerard advanced in learning and skill. His spirits, too, rose visibly: he still looked behind him when dragged to dinner in the middle of an initial G; but once seated showed great social qualities: likewise a gay humor, that had hitherto but peeped in him, shone out, and often he set the table in a roar, and kept it there, sometimes with his own wit, sometimes with jests which were glossy new to his family, being drawn from antiquity.

As a return for all he owed his friends the monks, he made them exquisite copies from two of their choicest MSS., viz., the life of their founder, and their Comedies of Terence, the monastery finding the vellum.

The high and puissant Prince, Philip "the Good," Duke of Burgundy, Luxemburg, and Brabant, Earl of Holland and Zealand, Lord of Friesland, Count of Flanders, Artois, and Hainault, Lord of Salins and Macklyn—was versatile.

He could fight as well as any king going; and he could lie as well as any except the King of France. He was a mighty hunter, and could read and write. His tastes were wide and ardent. He loved jewels like a woman, and gorgeous apparel. He dearly loved maids of honor, and paintings generally; in proof of which he ennobled Jan Van Eyck. He had also a particular fancy for giants, dwarfs, and Turks; these last he had ever about him, turbaned, and blazing with jewels. His agents inveigled them from Istamboul with fair promises: but the moment he had got them he baptized them by brute force in a large tub; and, this done, let them squat with their faces toward Mecca, and invoke Mahound as much as they pleased, laughing in his sleeve at their simplicity in fancying they were still infidels. He had lions in cages, and fleet leopards trained by orientals to run down hares and deer. In short, he relished all rarities, except humdrum

virtues. For any thing singularly pretty, or diabolically ugly, this was your customer. The best of him was, he was open-handed to the poor; and the next best was, he fostered the arts in earnest: whereof he now gave a signal proof. He offered prizes for the best specimens of "orfèvrerie" in two kinds, religious and secular; item for the best paintings in white of egg, oils, and tempera; these to be on panel, silk, or metal as the artists chose: item for the best transparent painting on glass: item for the best illuminating and border-painting on vellum: item for the fairest writing on vellum. The Burgomasters of the several towns were commanded to aid all the poorer competitors by receiving their specimens and sending them with due care to Rotterdam at the expense of their several burghs. When this was cried by the bellman through the streets of Tergou, a thousand mouths opened, and one heart beat—Gerard's. He told his family he should try for two of those prizes. They stared in silence, for their breath was gone at his conceit and audacity: but one horrid laugh exploded on the floor like a petard. Gerard looked down, and there was the dwarf, whose very whisper was a bassoon, slit and fanged from ear to ear at his expense, and laughing like a lion. Nature relenting at having made Giles so small, had given him as a set-off the biggest voice on record. He was like those stunted wide-mouthed pieces of ordnance we see on fortifications; they are more like a flower-pot than a cannon; but ods tympana how they bellow!

Gerard turned red with anger, the more so as the others began to titter. White Catherine saw, and a pink tinge just perceptible came to her cheek. She said softly, "Why do you laugh? Is it because he is our brother you think he can not be capable. Yes, Gerard, try with the rest. Many say you are skillful; and mother and I will pray the Virgin to guide your hand."

"Thank you, little Kate. You shall pray to our Lady, and our mother shall buy vellum and the colors to illuminate with."

"What will they cost?"

"Two gold crowns" (about three shillings and fourpence English money).

"What?" screamed the housewife; "when the bushel of rye costs but a groat! What! me spend a month's meal and meat and fire on such vanity as that: the lightning from Heaven would fall on me, and my children would all be beggars."

"Mother!" sighed little Catherine, imploringly.

"Oh! it is in vain, Kate," said Gerard, with a sigh. "I shall have to give it up, or ask the dame Van Eyck. She would give it me, but I think shame to be forever taking from her."

"It is not her affair," said Catherine, very sharply; "what has she to do coming between me and my son?" And she left the room with a red face. Little Catherine smiled. Presently the housewife returned with a gracious, affectionate air, and the two little gold pieces in her hand.

"There, sweetheart," said she, "you won't have to trouble dame or demoiselle for two paltry crowns."

But on this Gerard fell a thinking how he could spare her purse.

"One will do, mother. I will ask the good monks to let me send my copy of their 'Terence:' it is on snowy vellum, and I can write no better: so then I shall only need six sheets of vellum for my borders and miniatures, and gold for my ground, and prime colors—one crown will do."

"Never spoil the ship for want of a bit of tar, Gerard," said this changeable mother. But she added, "Well, there, I will put the crown in my pocket. That won't be like putting it back in the box. Going to the box to take out instead of putting in—it is like going to my heart with a knife for so many drops of blood. You will be sure to want it, Gerard. The house is never built for less than the builder counted on."

Sure enough, when the time came, Gerard longed to go to Rotterdam and see the Duke, and above all to see the work of his competitors, and so get a lesson from defeat. And the crown came out of the housewife's pocket with a very good grace. Gerard would soon be a priest. It seemed hard if he might not enjoy the world a little before separating himself from it for life.

The day before he went, Margaret Van Eyck asked him to take a letter for her, and when he came to look at it, somewhat to his surprise he found it was addressed to the Princess Marie, at the Stadthouse, in Rotterdam.

The day before the prizes were to be distributed, Gerard started for Rotterdam thus equipped; he had a doublet of silver-gray cloth with sleeves, and a jerkin of the same over it, but without sleeves. From his waist to his heels he was clad in a pair of tight-fitting buckskin hose fastened by laces (called points) to his doublet. His shoes were pointed, in moderation, and secured by a strap that passed under the hollow of the foot. On his head and the back of his neck he wore his flowing hair, and pinned to his back between his shoulders was his hat: it was farther secured by a purple silk ribbon little Kate had passed round him from the sides of the hat, and knotted neatly on his breast; below his hat, attached to the upper rim of his broad waist belt, was his leathern wallet. When he got within a league of Rotterdam he was pretty tired, but he soon fell in with a pair that were more so. He found an old man sitting by the road-side quite worn out, and a comely young woman holding his hand, with a face full of concern. The country people trudged by and noticed nothing amiss: but Gerard, as he passed, drew conclusions. Even dress tells a tale to those who study it so closely as our illuminator was wont to. The old man wore a gown, and a fur tippet, and a velvet cap, sure signs of dignity: but the triangular purse at his girdle was lean, the gown rusty, the fur worn, sure signs of poverty. The young woman was dressed in plain

russet cloth: yet snow-white lawn covered that part of her neck the gown left visible, and ended half way up her white throat in a little band of gold embroidery: and her headdress was new to Gerard; instead of hiding her hair in a pile of linen or lawn, she wore an open net-work of silver cord with silver spangles at the interstices: in this her glossy auburn hair was rolled in front into a solid wave, and supported behind in a luxurious and shapely mass. His quick eye took in all this, and the old man's deadly pallor, and the tears in the young woman's eyes. So when he had passed them a few yards, he reflected, and turned back, and came toward them bashfully.

"Father, I fear you are tired."

"Indeed, my son, I am," replied the old man; "and faint for lack of food."

Gerard's address did not appear so agreeable to the girl as to the old man. She seemed ashamed, and with much reserve in her manner said, that it was her fault; she had underrated the distance, and imprudently allowed her father to start too late in the day.

"No! no!" said the old man; "it is not the distance, it is the want of nourishment."

The girl put her arms round his neck, with tender concern, but took that opportunity of whispering, "Father, a stranger—a young man!"

But it was too late. Gerard, with great simplicity, and quite as a matter of course, fell to gathering sticks with great expedition. This done, he took down his wallet, out with the manchet of bread and the iron flask his careful mother had put up, and his everlasting tinder-box; lighted a match, then a candle-end, then the sticks; and put his iron flask on it. Then down he went on his stomach and took a good blow: then looking up, he saw the girl's face had thawed, and she was looking down at him and his energy with a demure smile. He laughed back to her: "Mind the pot," said he, "and don't let it spill, for Heaven's sake: there's a cleft stick to hold it

safe with;" and with this he set off running toward a corn-field at some distance. While he was gone, there came by, on a mule with rich purple housings, an old man redolent with wealth. The purse at his girdle was plethoric, the fur on his tippet was ermine, broad and new.

It was Ghysbrecht Van Swieten, the Burgomaster of Tergou. He was old, and his face furrowed. He was a notorious miser, and looked one generally. But the idea of supping with the Duke raised him just now into manifest complacency. Yet at the sight of the faded old man and his bright daughter sitting by a fire of sticks, the smile died out of his face, and he wore a strange look of anguish and wrath. He reined in his mule. "Why, Peter—Margaret—" said he almost fiercely, "what mummerly is this!" Peter was going to answer, but Margaret interposed hastily, and said: "My father was exhausted, so I am warming something to give him strength before we go on." "What, reduced to feed by the road-side like the Bohemians," said Ghysbrecht, and his hand went into his purse: but it did not seem at home there, it fumbled uncertainly, afraid too large a coin might stick to a finger and come out.

At this moment, who should come bounding up but Gerard. He had two straws in his hand, and he threw himself down by the fire, and relieved Margaret of the cooking part: then suddenly recognizing the Burgomaster, he colored all over. Ghysbrecht Van Swieten started and glared at him, and took his hand out of his purse. "Oh," said he bitterly, "I am not wanted:" and went slowly on, casting a long look of suspicion on Margaret, and hostility on Gerard, that was not very intelligible. However, there was something about it that Margaret could read enough to blush at, and almost toss her head. Gerard only stared with surprise. "By St. Bavon, I think the old miser grudges us three our quart of soup," said he. When the young man put that interpretation on

Ghysbrecht's strange and meaning look, Margaret was greatly relieved, and smiled gayly on the speaker.

Meantime Ghysbrecht plodded on more wretched in his wealth than these in their poverty. And the curious thing is that the mule, the purple housings, and one half the coin in that plethoric purse, belonged not to Ghysbrecht Van Swieten, but to that faded old man and that comely girl, who sat by a road-side fire to be fed by a stranger.* They did not know this, but Ghysbrecht knew it, and carried in his heart a scorpion of his own begetting. That scorpion is remorse; the remorse, that, not being penitence, is incurable, and ready for fresh misdeeds upon a fresh temptation.

Twenty years ago, when Ghysbrecht Van Swieten was a hard but honest man, the touch-stone opportunity came to him, and he did an act of heartless roguery. It seemed a safe one. It had hitherto proved a safe one, though he had never felt safe. To-day he has seen youth, enterprise, and, above all, knowledge, seated by fair Margaret and her father on terms that look familiar and loving.

And the fiends are at his ear again.

CHAPTER III.

"THE soup is hot," said Gerard.

"But how are we to swallow it?" inquired the senior, despondingly.

"Father, the young man has brought us straws." And Margaret smiled slyly.

"Ay, ay!" said the old man: "but my poor bones are stiff, and indeed the fire is too hot for a body to kneel over with these short straws. St. John the Baptist! but the young man is adroit."

For, while he stated his difficulty, Gerard removed it. He untied in a moment the knot on his breast, took his hat off his back, put three stones into the corner, then,

wrapping his hand in the tail of his jerkin, whipped the flask off the fire, wedged it in between the stones, and put the hat under the old man's nose with a merry smile. The other tremulously inserted the pipe of rye-straw and sucked. Lo and behold his wan, drawn face was seen to light up more and more, till it quite glowed ; and, as soon as he had drawn a long breath :

"Hippocrates and Galen!" he cried, "'tis a 'soupe au vin'—the restorative of restoratives. Blessed be the nation that invented it, and the woman that made it, and the young man who brings it to fainting folk. Have a suck, my girl, while I relate to our host the history and virtues of this his sovereign compound. This corroborative, young sir, was not known to the ancients : we find it neither in their treatises of medicine, nor in those popular narratives, which reveal many of their remedies, both in chirurgery and medicine proper. Hector, in the Ilias, if my memory does not play me false—"

Margaret. "Alas! he's off."

"—was invited by one of the ladies in the poem to drink a draught of wine ; but he declined, on the plea that he was just going into battle, and must not take aught to weaken his powers. Now, if the 'soupe au vin' had been known in Troy, it is clear that in declining 'vinum merum' on that score, he would have added in the next hexameter, 'But a "soupe au vin," madam, I will degust, and gratefully.' Not only would this have been but common civility—a virtue no perfect commander is wanting in—but not to have done it would have proved him a shallow and improvident person, quite unfit to be trusted with the conduct of a war ; for men going into battle need sustenance and all possible support, as is proved by this—that foolish generals, bringing hungry soldiers to battle with full ones, have been defeated, in all ages, by inferior numbers. The Romans lost a great battle in the north of Italy to Hannibal the Carthaginian, by this neglect alone. Now, this divine elixir gives in

one moment force to the limbs and ardor to the spirits; and taken into Hector's body at the nick of time, would, by the aid of Phœbus, Venus, and the blessed saints, have most likely procured the Greeks a defeat. For, note how faint and weary and heart-sick I was a minute ago; well, I suck this celestial cordial, and now behold me brave as Achilles and strong as an eagle."

"Oh father! now, an eagle!"

"Girl, I defy thee and all the world. Ready, I say, like a foaming charger, to devour the space between this and Rotterdam, and strong to combat the ills of life, even poverty and old age, which last philosophers have called the 'summum malum.' Negatur; unless the man's life has been ill-spent—which, by-the-by, it generally has. Now for the moderns."

"Father! dear father!"

"Fear me not, girl, I will be brief, beyond measure brief. The 'soupe au vin' occurs not in modern science; but this is only one proof more, if proof were needed, that for the last few hundred years physicians have all been idiots, with their chicken broth and their dococ-tion of gold, whereby they attribute the highest qualities to that meat which has the least juice of any meat, and to that metal which has less chemical qualities than all the metals. Mountebanks! dunces! homicides! Since, then, from these no light is to be gathered, we must go to the chroniclers; and first we find that Duguesclin, a French knight, being about to join battle with the English—masters, at that time, of half France, and sturdy strikers by sea and land—drank, not one, but three 'soupes au vin,' in honor of the Blessed Trinity. This done, he charged the islanders; and as might have been expected, killed a multitude of them, and drove the rest into the sea. But he was only the first of a long list of holy and hard-hitting ones who have, by this divine restorative, been sustentated, fortified, corroborated, and consoled."

"Dear father, prithee add thyself to that list before the soup cools." And Margaret held the hat imploringly in both hands till he inserted the straw once more.

This spared them the "modern instances," and gave Gerard an opportunity of telling Margaret how proud his mother would be her soup had profited a man of learning.

"Ay! but," said Margaret, "it would like her ill to see her son give all and take none himself. Why brought you but two straws?"

"Fair mistress, I hoped you would let me put my lips to your straw, there being but two."

Margaret smiled, and blushed. "Never beg that you may command," said she. "The straw is not mine—'tis yours: you cut it in yonder field."

"I cut it, and that made it mine; but, after that, your lip touched it, and that made it yours."

"Did it? Then I will lend it to you. There—now it is yours again: *your* lip has touched it."

"No, it belongs to us both now. Let us divide it."

"By all means; you have a knife."

"No, I will not cut it—that would be unlucky. I'll bite it. There. I shall keep my half: you will burn yours the moment you get home, I doubt."

"You know me not. I waste nothing. It is odds but I make a hair-pin of it, or something."

This answer dashed the novice Gerard instead of provoking him to fresh efforts, and he was silent. And now, the bread and soup being disposed of, the old scholar prepared to continue his journey. Then came a little difficulty: Gerard the adroit could not tie his ribbon again as Catherine had tied it. Margaret, after slyly eying his efforts for some time, offered to help him; for at her age girls love to be coy and tender, saucy and gentle, by turns, and she saw she had put him out of countenance but now. Then a fair head, with its stately crown of auburn hair, glossy and glowing through sil-

ver, bowed sweetly toward him; and, while it ravished his eye, two white supple hands played delicately upon the stubborn ribbon, and moulded it with soft and airy touches. Then a heavenly thrill ran through the innocent young man, and vague glimpses of a new world of feeling and sentiment opened on him. And these new and exquisite sensations Margaret unwittingly prolonged: it is not natural to her sex to hurry aught that pertains to the sacred toilet. Nay, when the taper fingers had at last subjugated the ends of the knot, her mind was not quite easy till, by a manœuvre peculiar to the female hand, she had made her palm convex, and so applied it with a gentle pressure to the centre of the knot—a sweet little coaxing hand-kiss, as much as to say, “Now be a good knot, and stay as you are.” The palm-kiss was bestowed on the ribbon, but the wearer’s heart leaped to meet it.

“There, that is how it was,” said Margaret, and drew back to take one last keen survey of her work; then, looking up for simple approval of her skill, received full in her eyes a longing gaze of such ardent adoration, as made her lower them quickly and color all over. An indescribable tremor seized her, and she retreated with downcast lashes and tell-tale cheeks, and took her father’s arm on the opposite side. Gerard, blushing at having scared her with his eyes, took the other arm; and so the two young things went downcast and conscious, and propped the eagle along in silence.

They entered Rotterdam by the Schiedamse Poort; and, as Gerard was unacquainted with the town, Peter directed him the way to the Hooch Straet, in which the Stadthouse was. He himself was going with Margaret to his cousin, in the Ooster Waagen Straet; so almost on entering the gate, their roads lay apart. They bade each other a friendly adieu, and Gerard dived into the great town. A profound, an aching sense of solitude, fell upon him, yet the streets were crowded. Then he

lamented too late that, out of delicacy, he had not asked his late companions who they were and where they lived.

“Beshrew my shamefacedness!” said he. “But their words and their breeding were above their means, and something whispered me they would not be known. I shall never see her more. Oh! weary world, I hate you and your ways. To think I must meet beauty and goodness and learning—three pearls of price—and never see them more!”

Falling into this sad reverie, and letting his body go where it would, he lost his way; but presently meeting a crowd of persons all moving in one direction, he mingled with them, for he argued they must be making for the Stadthouse. Soon the noisy troop that contained the moody Gerard emerged, not upon the Stadthouse, but upon a large meadow by the side of the Maas; and then the attraction was at once revealed. Games of all sorts were going on: wrestling, the game of palm, the quintain, legerdemain, archery, tumbling, in which art, I blush to say, women as well as men performed, to the great delectation of the company. There was also a trained bear, which stood on his head, and stood upright and bowed with prodigious gravity to his master; and a hare that beat a drum, and a cock that strutted on little stilts disdainfully. These things made Gerard laugh now and then; but the gay scene could not really enliven it, for his heart was not in tune with it. So, hearing a young man say to his fellow that the Duke had been in the meadow, but was gone to the Stadthouse to entertain the burgomasters and aldermen and the competitors for the prizes, and their friends, he suddenly remembered he was hungry, and should like to sup with a prince. He left the river-side, and this time he found the Hooch Straet, and it speedily led him to the Stadthouse. But when he got there he was refused, first at one door, then at another, till he came to the great gate of the court-

yard. It was kept by soldiers, and superintended by a pompous major-domo, glittering in an embroidered collar and a gold chain of office, and holding a white staff with a gold knob. There was a crowd of persons at the gate endeavoring to soften this official rock. They came up in turn like ripples, and retired to make way for others equally unsuccessful. It cost Gerard a struggle to get near him, and when he got within four heads of the gate, he saw something that made his heart beat: there was Peter, with Margaret on his arm, soliciting humbly for entrance.

"My cousin the alderman is not at home. They say he is here."

"What is that to me, old man?"

"If you will not let us pass in to him, at least take this leaf from my tablet to my cousin. See, I have written his name: he will come out to us."

"For what do you take me? I carry no messages. I keep the gate."

He then bawled, in a stentorian voice, inexorably:

"No strangers enter here but the competitors and their companies."

"Come, old man," cried a voice in the crowd, "you have gotten your answer; make way."

Margaret turned half round imploringly:

"Good people! we are come from far, and my father is old; and my cousin has a new servant that knows us not, and would not let us sit in our cousin's house."

At this the crowd laughed hoarsely. Margaret shrank as if they had struck her. At that moment a hand grasped hers—such a grasp: it felt like heart meeting heart, or magnet steel. She turned quickly round at it, and it was Gerard. Such a little cry of joy and appeal came from her bosom, and she began to whimper prettily:

They had hustled her and frightened her for one thing; and her cousin's thoughtlessness in not even telling his

servant they were coming was cruel; and the servant's caution, however wise and faithful to his master, was bitterly mortifying to her father and her. And to her—so mortified, and anxious and jostled—came suddenly this kind hand and face. "*Hinc illæ lacrimæ.*"

"All is well now," remarked a coarse humorist; "she has gotten her sweetheart."

"Haw! haw! haw!" went the crowd.

She dropped Gerard's hand directly, and turned round, with eyes flashing through her tears:

"I have no sweetheart, you rude men. But I am friendless in your boorish town, and this is a friend; and one who knows, what you know not, how to treat the aged and the weak."

The crowd was dead silent. They had only been thoughtless, and now felt the rebuke, though severe, was just. The silence enabled Gerard to treat with the porter.

"I am a competitor, sir."

"What is your name?" and the man eyed him suspiciously.

"Gerard, the son of Gerard."

The janitor inspected a slip of parchment he held in his hand:

"Gerard Gerardssoen can enter."

"With my company—these two?"

"Nay; those are not your company: they came before you."

"What matter? they are my friends, and without them I go not in."

"Stay without, then."

"That will I not."

"That we will see."

"We will, and speedily."

Gerard then raised a voice of astounding volume and power, and shouted, so that the whole street rang:

"HO! PHILIP EARL OF HOLLAND!"

"Are you mad?"

"HERE IS ONE OF YOUR VARLETS DEFIES YOU."

"Hush, hush!"

"AND WILL NOT LET YOUR GUESTS PASS IN."

"Hush! murder! The Duke's there! I'm dead!" cried the janitor, quaking.

Then suddenly trying to overpower Gerard's thunder, he shouted, with all his lungs:

"OPEN THE GATE, YE KNAVES! WAY THERE FOR GERARD GERARDSOEN AND HIS COMPANY! (the fiends go with him!)"

The gate swung open as by magic. Eight soldiers lowered their pikes half way, and made an arch, under which the victorious three marched in triumphant. The moment they had passed, the pikes clashed together horizontally to bar the gateway, and all but pinned an abdominal citizen that sought to be of Gerard's company unbidden.

Once passed the guarded portal, a few steps brought the trio upon a scene of Oriental luxury. The courtyard was laid out in tables loaded with rich meats, and literally piled with gorgeous plate. Guests in rich and various costumes sat beneath a leafy canopy of fresh-cut branches fastened tastefully to golden, silver, and blue silken cords that traversed the area; and fruits of many hues, including some artificial ones of gold, silver, and wax, hung pendent, or peeped, like fair eyes, among the green leaves of plane-trees and lime-trees. The Duke's minstrels swept their lutes at intervals, and a fountain played red Burgundy in six jets that met and battled in the air. The evening sun darted its fires through those bright and purple wine spouts, making them jets and cascades of molten rubies, then passing on, tinged with the blood of the grape, shed crimson glories here and there on fair faces, snowy beards, velvet, satin, jeweled hilts, glowing gold, gleaming silver, and sparkling glass. Gerard and his friends stood dazzled, spell-bound. Pres-

ently a whisper buzzed round them, "Salute the Duke! Salute the Duke!" They looked up, and there on high, under the dais, was their sovereign, bidding them welcome with a kindly wave of the hand. The men bowed low, and Margaret courtesied with a deep and graceful obeisance. The Duke's hand being up he gave it another turn, and pointed the new-comers out to a knot of valets. Instantly seven of his people, with an obedient start, went headlong at our friends, seated them at a table, and put fifteen many-colored soups before them, in little silver bowls, and as many wines in crystal vases.

"Nay, father, do not let us eat until we have thanked our good friend," said Margaret, now first recovering from all this bustle.

"Girl, he is our guardian angel."

Gerard put his face into his hands.

"Tell me when you have done," said he, "and I will reappear and have my supper, for I am hungry. I know which of us three is the happiest at meeting again."

"Me?" inquired Margaret.

"No: guess again."

"Father?"

"No."

"Then I have no idea which it can be;" and she gave a little crow of happiness and gayety. The soup was tasted, and vanished in a twirl of fourteen hands, and fish came on the table in a dozen forms, with patties of lobster and almonds mixed, and of almonds and cream, and an immense variety of "brouets," known to us as "rissoles." The next trifle was a wild boar, which smelt divine. Why, then, did Margaret start away from it with two shrieks of dismay, and pinch so good a friend as Gerard? Because the Duke's "cuisinier" had been too clever; had made this excellent dish too captivating to the sight as well as taste. He had restored to the animal, by elaborate mimicry with burned sugar and other edible colors, the hair and bristles he had robbed

him of by fire and water. To make him still more enticing, the huge tusks were carefully preserved in the brute's jaw, and gave his mouth that winning smile you may have noticed as a result of tusk in man or beast, and two eyes of colored sugar glowed in his head. St. Argus! what eyes! so bright, so bloodshot, so threatening—they followed a man and his every movement. But, indeed, I need the pencil of my artist associate to make you see the two gilt valets on the opposite side of the table putting the monster down before our friends, with a smiling, self-satisfied, benevolent obsequiousness—for this ghastly monster was the flower of all comestibles; old Peter clasping both hands in pious admiration of it; Margaret wheeling round with horror-stricken eyes and her hand on Gerard's shoulder, squeaking and pinching; his face of foolish delight at being pinched, the grizzly brute glaring sulkily on all, and the guests grinning from ear to ear.

"What's to do?" shouted the Duke, hearing the signals of distress. Seven of his people with a zealous start went headlong and told him. He laughed, and said, "Give her of the beef-stuffing, then, and bring me Sir Boar." Benevolent monarch! The beef-stuffing was his own private dish.

On these grand occasions an ox was roasted whole, and reserved for the poor. But this wise as well as charitable prince had discovered, that whatever venison, hares, lamb, poultry, etc., you skewered into that beef cavern, got cooked to perfection, retaining their own juices and receiving those of the reeking ox. These he called his beef-stuffing, and took delight therein, as did now our trio; for at his word, seven of his people went headlong, and drove silver tridents into the steaming cave at random, and speared a kid, a cygnet, and a flock of wild fowl. These presently smoked before Gerard and company; and Peter's face, profoundly sad and slightly morose at the loss of the savage hog, expanded

and shone. After this, twenty different tarts of fruits and herbs, and last of all, confectionery on a Titanic scale—cathedrals of sugar, all gilt and painted in the interstices of the bas-reliefs; castles with their moats, and ditches, imitated to the life; elephants, camels, toads; knights on horseback justing; kings and princesses looking on; trumpeters blowing; and all these characters delicious eating, and their veins filled with sweet-scented juices—works of art made to be destroyed. The guests breached a bastion, crunched a crusader and his horse and lance, or cracked a Bishop, cope, chasuble, crosier and all, as remorselessly as we do a caraway comfit; sipping, meanwhile, hippocras and other spiced drinks, and Greek and Corsican wines, while every now and then little Turkish boys, turbaned, spangled, jeweled, and gilt, came offering on bended knee golden troughs of rose-water and orange-water to keep the guests' hands cool and perfumed.

But long before our party arrived at this final stage, appetite had succumbed, and one or two circumstances had occurred apparently trifling. Gerard had suddenly remembered he was the bearer of a letter to the Princess Marie, and, in an under tone, had asked one of the servants if he would undertake to deliver it. The man took it with a deep obeisance: "He could not deliver it himself, but would instantly give it to one of the princess's suite, several of whom were about."

It may be remembered that Peter and Margaret came here not to dine, but to find their cousin. Well, the old gentleman ate heartily, and being much fatigued dropped asleep, and forgot all about his cousin. Margaret did not remind him, we shall hear why.

Meantime, their cousin, William Johnson, alderman of Rotterdam, was seated within a few feet of them, at their backs, and discovered them when Margaret turned round and screamed at the boar. But he did not speak to them, for the following reason. Margaret was very plainly dress-

ed, and Peter inclined to threadbare. So the alderman said :

" 'Twill be time to make up to them when the sun sets and the company disperses : then I will take my poor relations to my house, and none will be the wiser."

Half the courses were lost on Gerard and Margaret. They were no great eaters, and just now were feeding on sweet thoughts that have ever been unfavorable to appetite. And it was a relief to them when the dessert came and the valets retired a few steps, and they could talk without being overheard. But there is a delicate kind of sensuality, to whose influence these two were perhaps more sensitive than any other pair in that assembly ; the delights of color, music, and perfume, all of which blended so fascinatingly here.

Margaret leaned back and half closed her eyes, and murmured to Gerard : " What a lovely scene ! the warm sun, the green shade, the rich dresses, the bright music of the lutes and the cool music of the fountain, and all faces so happy and gay ! and it is to you we owe it."

Gerard was silent.

" Now, don't speak to me," said Margaret languidly, " let me listen to the fountain : what are you a competitor for ?"

He told her.

" Very well ! You will gain one prize, at least."

" Which ? which ? have you seen any of my work ?"

" I ? no. But you will gain a prize."

" I hope so : but what makes you think so ?"

" Because you were so good to my father."

Gerard smiled at the feminine logic, and hung his head at the sweet praise, and was silent.

" Don't speak," murmured Margaret. " They say this is a world of sin and misery. Can that be ? What is your opinion ?"

" No ! that is all a silly old song," explained Gerard.

"'Tis a by-word our elders keep repeating out of custom—it is not true."

"How can you know? you are but a child," said Margaret, with pensive dignity.

"Why only look round! And then I thought I had lost you—forever; and you are by my side: and now the minstrels are going to play again. Sin and misery? Stuff and nonsense!"

"What do you admire most of all these beautiful things, Gerard?"

"You know my name? How is that?"

"White magic. I am a witch."

"Angels are never witches. But I can't think how you—"

"Foolish boy! was it not cried at the gate loud enough to deafen one?"

"So it was. Where is my head? What do I admire most? If you will sit a little more that way, I'll tell you."

"This way?"

"Yes! so that the light may fall on you. There. I see many beautiful things here, more beautiful than I could have conceived; but the finest of all to my eye, is your lovely hair in its silver frame, and the setting sun kissing it. It minds me of what the Vulgate praised for beauty, '*an apple of gold in a net-work of silver*,' and, Oh what a pity I did not know you before I sent in my poor efforts at illuminating! I could illuminate so much better now. I could do every thing better. There, now the sun is full on it, it is like an aureole. So our Lady looked, and none since her until to-day."

"Oh fie! it is wicked to talk so. Compare a poor, coarse-favored girl like me with the Queen of Heaven! Oh Gerard! I thought you were a good young man."

"So I am. But I can't help having eyes—and a heart—Margaret."

"Gerard?"

"Don't be angry!"

"Now, is it likely?"

"I love you."

"Oh for shame! you must not say that to me."

"I can't help it. I love you. I love you."

"Hush, hush! for pity's sake! I must not listen to such words from a stranger. I am ungrateful to call you a stranger. Oh how one may be mistaken! if I had known you were so bold—" And Margaret's bosom began to heave, and her cheeks were covered with blushes, and she looked toward her sleeping father, very much like a timid thing that meditates actual flight.

Then Gerard was frightened at the alarm he caused. "Forgive me," said he imploringly. "How could any one help loving you!"

"Well, sir, I will *try* and forgive you—you are so good in other respects; but then you must promise never to say you—to say *that* again."

"Give me your hand then, or you don't forgive me."

She hesitated; but eventually put out her hand a very little way, very slowly. He took it, and held it prisoner. When she thought it had been there long enough, she tried gently to draw it away. He held it tight: it submitted quite patiently to force. What *is* the use of resisting force? She turned her head away, and her long eyelashes drooped sweetly. Gerard lost nothing by his promise. Words were not needed here: and silence was more eloquent. Nature was in that day what she is in ours; but manners were somewhat freer. Then, as now, virgins drew back alarmed at the first words of love; but of prudery and artificial coquetry there was little, and the young soon read one another's hearts. Every thing was in Gerard's favor: his good looks, her belief in his goodness, her gratitude; and, at the Duke's banquet this mellow summer eve, all things disposed the female nature to tenderness; the avenues to the heart lay open; the senses

were so soothed and subdued with lovely colors, gentle sounds, and delicate odors; the sun gently sinking, the warm air, the green canopy, the cool music of the now violet fountain.

Gerard and Margaret sat hand in hand in silence: and Gerard's eyes sought hers lovingly; and hers now and then turned on him timidly and imploringly: and two sweet unreasonable tears rolled down her cheeks, and she smiled deliciously ere they were dry.

And the sun declined; and the air cooled; and the fountain plashed more gently; and the pair throbbed in unison, and silence, and this weary world was heaven to them.

CHAPTER IV.

A GRAVE white-haired seneschal came to their table, and inquired courteously whether Gerard Gerardssoen was of their company. Upon Gerard's answer, he said,

"The Princess Marie would confer with you, young sir; I am to conduct you to her presence."

Instantly all faces within hearing turned sharp round, and were bent with curiosity and envy on the man that was to go to a princess.

Gerard rose to obey.

"I wager we shall not see you again," said Margaret, calmly, but coloring a little.

"That will you," was the reply: then he whispered in her ear. "This is my good princess; but you are my

queen." He added aloud: "Wait for me, I pray you; I will presently return."

"Ay, ay!" said Peter, who had just awoke.

Gerard gone, the pair whose dress was so homely, yet they were with the man whom the princess sent for, became "the cynosure of neighboring eyes;" observing which, William Johnson came forward, acted surprise, and claimed his relations:

"And to think that there was I at your backs, and you saw me not."

"Pardon me, cousin Johnson, I saw you long since," said Margaret, coldly.

"You saw me, and spoke not to me?"

"Nay, cousin, it was for you to welcome us to Rotterdam, as it is for us to welcome you at Sevenbergen. Your servant denied us a seat in your house."

"The idiot!"

"And I had a mind to see whether it was 'like maid like master?' for there is sooth in by-words."

William Johnson blushed purple. He saw Margaret was keen, and suspected him. He did the wisest thing under the circumstances—trusted to deeds not words. He insisted on their coming home with him at once, and he would show them whether they were welcome to Rotterdam or not.

"Who doubts it, cousin? Who doubts it?" said the scholar.

Margaret thanked him graciously, but demurred to go just now: said she wanted to hear the minstrels again. In about a quarter of an hour Johnson renewed his proposal, and bade her observe that many of the guests had left. Then her real reason came out.

"It were ill manners to our friend: and he will lose us. He knows not where we lodge in Rotterdam, and the city is large, and we have parted company once already.

"Oh!" said Johnson, "we will provide for that. My

young man, ahem! I mean my secretary, shall sit here and wait, and bring him on to my house: he shall lodge with me and with no other."

"Cousin, we shall be too burdensome."

"Nay, nay, you shall see whether you are welcome or not—you and your friends, and your friends' friends, if need be; and I shall hear what the princess would with him."

Margaret felt a thrill of joy that Gerard should be lodged under the same roof with her; then she had a slight misgiving. "But if your young man should be thoughtless, and go play, and Gerard miss him—"

"He go play? He leave the spot where I put him, and bid him stay? Ho! Stand forth, Hans Cloterman."

A figure clad in black serge and dark violet hose got up, and took two steps and stood before them without moving a muscle: a solemn, precise young man, the very statue of gravity and starched propriety. At his aspect Margaret, being very happy, could hardly keep her countenance. But she whispered Johnson, "I would put my hand in the fire for him! We are at your command, cousin, as soon as you have given him his orders."

Hans was then instructed to sit at the table and wait for Gerard, and conduct him to Ooster-Waagen Street. He replied, not in words, but by calmly taking the seat indicated, and Margaret, Peter, and William Johnson went with the latter.

"And, indeed, it is time you were abed, father, after all your travel," said Margaret. This had been in her mind all along.

Hans Cloterman sat waiting for Gerard, solemn and business-like. The minutes flew by, but excited no impatience in that perfect young man. Johnson did him no more than justice when he laughed to scorn the idea of his secretary leaving his post, or neglecting his duty, in pursuit of sport, or out of youthful hilarity and frivolity.

As Gerard was long in coming, the patient Hans—his employer's eye being no longer on him—"tandem custode remoto," improved the time by quaffing solemnly, silently, and at short but accurately measured intervals, goblets of Corsican wine. The wine was strong, so was Cloterman's head : and it was not until Gerard had been gone a good hour the model secretary had imbibed the notion that creation expected of Cloterman to drink the health of all good fellows, and "nommément" of the Duke of Burgundy there present. With this view, he filled bumper nine, and rose gingerly, but solemnly and slowly. Having reached his full height, he instantly rolled upon the grass goblet in hand, spilling the cold liquor on many an ankle, but not disturbing a muscle in his own long face, which, in the total eclipse of reason, retained its gravity, primness, and infallibility.

CHAPTER V.

THE seneschal led Gerard through several passages to the door of a pavilion, where some young noblemen, embroidered and feathered, sat sentinel, guarding the heir-apparent, and playing cards by the red light of torches their servants held. A whisper from the seneschal, and one of them rose reluctantly, stared at Gerard with haughty surprise, and entered the pavilion. He presently returned, and, beckoning the pair, led them through a passage or two and landed them in an ante-chamber, where sat three more young gentlemen, feathered, furred, and embroidered like pieces of fancy-work, and deep in that instructive and edifying branch of learning, dice.

"You can't see the Princess—it is too late," said one.

Another followed suit :

"She passed this way but now with her nurse. She is gone to bed, doll and all—duece-ace again !"

Gerard prepared to retire. The seneschal, with an incredulous smile, replied :

"The young man is here by the countess's orders ; be so good as conduct him to her ladies."

On this a superb Adonis rose, with an injured look, and led Gerard into a room where sat or lolloped eleven ladies, chattering like magpies. Two, more industrious than the rest, were playing cat's-cradle, with fingers as nimble as their tongues. At the sight of a stranger all the tongues stopped like one piece of complicated machinery, and all the eyes turned on Gerard, as if the same string that checked the tongues had turned the eyes on. Gerard was ill at ease before, but this battery of eyes discountenanced him, and down went *his* eyes on the ground. Then the cowards finding, like the hare who ran by the pond and the frogs scuttled into the water, that there was a creature they could frighten, giggled and enjoyed their prowess. Then a duenna said, severely, "Mesdames !" and they were abashed as one woman. This same duenna took Gerard, and marched before him in solemn silence. The young man's heart sank, and he had half a mind to turn and run out of the place. "What must princes be," he thought, "when their courtiers are so freezing. Of course they take their breeding from him they serve." These reflections were interrupted by the duenna suddenly introducing him into a room where three ladies sat working, and a pretty little girl tuning a lute. The ladies were richly but not showily dressed, and the duenna went up to the one who was hemming a kerchief, and said a few words in a low tone. This lady then turned toward Gerard, with a smile, and beckoned him to come near her. She did not rise, but she laid aside her work, and her manner of turning toward him, slight as the movement was, was full of grace and ease and courtesy. She began a conversation at once.

"Margaret Van Eyck is an old friend of mine, sir, and I am right glad to have a letter from her hand, and thank-

ful to you, sir, for bringing it to me safely. Marie, my love, this is the young gentleman who brought you that pretty miniature."

"Sir, I thank you a thousand times," said the young lady.

"I am glad you feel obliged to him, sweetheart, for our friend wishes us to do him a little service in return."

"I will do any thing on earth for him," replied the young lady, with ardor.

"Any thing on earth is nothing in the world," said the Countess of Charolois, quietly.

"Well, then, I will——What would you have me to do, sir?"

Gerard had just found out what high society he was in. "My sovereign demoiselle," said he, gently and a little tremulously, "where there have been no pains there needs no reward."

"But we must obey mamma. All the world must obey mamma."

"That is true. Then, our demoiselle, reward me, if you will, by letting me hear the stave you were going to sing and I interrupted it."

"What, you love music, sir?"

"I adore it."

The little princess looked inquiringly at her mother, and received a smile of assent. She then took her lute and sang a romaunt of the day. Although but twelve years old, she was a well-taught and pains-taking musician. Her little claw swept the chords with courage and precision, and struck out the notes of the arpeggio clear and distinct, and bright like twinkling stars; but the main charm was her voice. It was not mighty, but it was round, clear, full, and ringing like a bell. She sang with a certain modest eloquence, though she knew none of the tricks of feeling. She was too young to be theatrical, or even sentimental, so nothing was forced—all gushed. Her little mouth seemed the mouth of Nature.

The ditty, too, was as pure as its utterance. As there were none of those false divisions—those whining slurs, which are now sold so dear by Italian songsters, though every jackal in India delivers them gratis to his customers all night, and sometimes gets shot for them, and always deserves it—so there were no cadences and fiorituri; the trite, turgid, and feeble expletives of song, the skim-milk, with which mindless musicians and mindless writers quench fire, wash out color, and drown melody and meaning dead.

While the pure and tender strain was flowing from the pure young throat, Gerard's eyes filled with tears. The countess watched him with interest, for it was usual to applaud the princess loudly, but not with cheek and eye. So when the voice ceased, and the glasses left off ringing, she asked demurely, "Was he satisfied?"

Gerard gave a little start; the spoken voice broke a charm, and brought him back to earth.

"Oh, madam!" he cried, "surely it is thus that cherubs and seraphs sing and charm the saints in heaven."

"I am somewhat of your opinion, my young friend," said the countess, with emotion; and she bent a look of love and gentle pride upon her girl: a heavenly look, such as, they say, is given to the eye of the short-lived resting on the short-lived.

The countess resumed:

"My old friend requests me to be serviceable to you. It is the first favor she has done us the honor of asking us, and the request is sacred. You are in holy orders, sir?"

Gerard bowed.

"I fear you are not a priest, you look too young."

"Oh no, madam! I am not even a sub-deacon. I am only a lector; but next month I shall be an exorcist; and before long an acolyth."

"Well, Monsieur Gerard, with your accomplishments

you can soon pass through the inferior orders. And let me beg you to do so. For the day after you have said your first mass, I shall have the pleasure of appointing you to a benefice."

"Oh, madam!"

"And Marie, remember I make this promise in your name as well as my own."

"Fear not, mamma: I will not forget. But if he will take my advice, what he will be is Bishop of Liège. The Bishop of Liège is a beautiful bishop. What! don't you remember him, mamma, that day we were at Liège? he was braver than grandpapa himself. He had on a crown—a high one, and it was cut in the middle, and it was full of oh! such beautiful jewels: and his gown stiff with gold; and his mantle, too; and it had a broad border all pictures: but, above all, his gloves; you have no such gloves, mamma. They were embroidered and covered with jewels, and scented with such lovely scent; I smelt them all the time he was giving me his blessing on my head with them. Dear old man! I dare say he will die soon—most old people do—and then, sir, you can be bishop, you know, and wear—"

"Gently, Marie, gently: bishoprics are for old gentlemen; and this is a young gentleman."

"Mamma! he is not so very young."

"Not compared with you, Marie, eh?"

"He is a good bigness, dear mamma; and I am sure he is *good* enough for a bishop."

"Alas, mademoiselle! you are mistaken."

"I don't know that, Monsieur Gerard; but I am a little puzzled to know on what grounds mademoiselle there pronounced your character so boldly."

"Alas, mamma!" said the princess, "you have not looked at his face then;" and she raised her eyebrows at her mother's simplicity.

"I beg your pardon," said the countess, "I have. Well, sir, if I can not go quite so fast as my daughter,

attribute it to my age, not to a want of interest in your welfare. A benefice will do to begin your career with; and I must take care it is not too far from—what call you the place?”

“Tergou, madam.”

“A priest gives up much,” continued the countess; “often, I fear, he learns too late how much:” and her woman’s eye rested a moment on Gerard with mild pity and half surprise at his resigning her sex, and all the heaven they can bestow, and the great parental joys: “at least you shall be near your friends. Have you a mother?”

“Yes, madam; thanks be to God!”

“Good! You shall have a church near Tergou. She will thank me. And now, sir, we must not detain you too long from those who have a better claim on your society than we have. Duchess, oblige me by bidding one of the pages conduct him to the hall of banquet; the way is hard to find.”

Gerard bowed low to the countess and the princess, and backed toward the door.

“I hope it will be a nice benefice,” said the princess to him, with a pretty smile, as he was going out; then, shaking her head with an air of solemn misgiving, “but you had better have been Bishop of Liège.”

Gerard followed his new conductor, his heart warm with gratitude: but ere he reached the banquet-hall a chill came over him. The mind of one who has led a quiet, uneventful life, is not apt to take in contradictory feelings at the same moment and balance them, but rather to be overpowered by each in turn. While Gerard was with the countess, the excitement of so new a situation, the unlooked-for promise, the joy and pride it would cause at home, possessed him wholly: but now it was passion’s turn to be heard again. What, give up Margaret, whose soft hand he still felt in his, and her deep eyes in his heart? resign her and all the world of love and

joy she had opened on him to-day? The revulsion, when it did come, was so strong, that he hastily resolved to say nothing at home about the offered benefice. "The countess is so good," thought he, "she has a hundred ways of aiding a young man's fortune: she will not compel me to be a priest when she shall learn I love one of her sex: one would almost think she does know it, for she cast a strange look on me, and said, 'A priest gives up much, too much.' I dare say she will give me a place about the palace." And with this hopeful reflection his mind was eased, and, being now at the entrance of the banqueting-hall, he thanked his conductor, and ran hastily with joyful eyes to Margaret. He came in sight of the table—she was gone. Peter was gone too. Nobody was at the table at all; only a citizen in sober garments had just tumbled under it dead drunk, and several persons were raising him to carry him away. Gerard never guessed how important this solemn drunkard was to him: he was looking for "Beauty," and let "the beast" lie. He ran wildly round the hall, which was now comparatively empty. She was not there. He left the palace: outside he found a crowd gaping at two great fan-lights just lighted over the gate. He asked them earnestly if they had seen an old man in a gown, and a lovely girl pass out. They laughed at the question. "They were staring at these new lights that turn night into day. They didn't trouble their heads about old men and young wenches, every-day sights." From another group he learned there was a mystery being played under canvas hard by, and all the world gone to see it. This revived his hopes, and he went and saw the mystery. In this representation divine personages, too sacred for me to name here, came clumsily down from heaven to talk sophistry with the cardinal virtues, the nine muses, and the seven deadly sins, all present in human shape, and not unlike one another. To enliven which weary stuff in rattled the prince of the power of

the air, and an imp that kept molesting him and buffet-
ing him with a bladder, at each thwack of which the
crowd were in ecstasies. When the vices had uttered
good store of obscenity and the virtues twaddle, the ce-
lestials, including the nine muses, went gingerly back to
heaven one by one; for there was but one cloud; and
two artisans worked it up with its supernatural freight,
and worked it down with a winch, in full sight of the au-
dience. These disposed of, the bottomless pit opened
and flamed in the centre of the stage: the carpenters and
virtues shoved the vices in, and the virtues and Beelzebub
and his tormentor danced merrily round the place of
eternal torture to the fife and tabor.

This entertainment was written by the Bishop of Ghent
for the diffusion of religious sentiment by the aid of the
senses, and was an average specimen of theatrical exhi-
bitions so long as they were in the hands of the clergy.
But, alas! in course of time the laity conducted the plays,
and so the theatre, my reverend friends inform me, has
become profane.

Margaret was nowhere in the crowd, and Gerard
could not enjoy the performance: he actually went away
in Act 2, in the midst of a much-admired piece of dia-
logue, in which Justice outquibbled Satan. He walked
through many streets, but could not find her he sought.
At last, fairly worn out, he went to a hostelry and slept
till daybreak. All that day, heavy and heartsick, he
sought her, but could never fall in with her or her father,
nor ever obtain the slightest clew. Then he felt she was
false, or had changed her mind. He was irritated now,
as well as sad. More good fortune fell on him: he al-
most hated it. At last, on the third day, after he had
once more been through every street, he said, "She is not
in the town, and I shall never see her again. I will go
home." He started for Tergou with royal favor prom-
ised, with fifteen golden angels in his purse, a golden
medal on his bosom, and a heart like a lump of lead.

CHAPTER VI.

It was near four o'clock in the afternoon. Gerard was in the shop. His eldest and youngest sons were abroad. Catherine and her little crippled daughter had long been anxious about Gerard, and now they were gone a little way down the road, to see if by good luck he might be visible in the distance; and Giles was alone in the sitting-room, which I will sketch, furniture and dwarf included.

The Hollanders were always an original and leading people. At different epochs they invented printing (wooden type), oil-painting, liberty, banking, gardening, etc.; above all, years before my tale, they invented cleanliness. So, while the English gentry, in velvet jerkins and chicken-toed shoes, trod floors of stale rushes, foul receptacle of bones, decomposing morsels, spittle, dogs' eggs, and all abominations, this hosier's sitting-room at Tergou was floored with Dutch tiles, so highly glazed and constantly washed, that you could eat off them. There was one large window; the cross stone-work in the centre of it was very massive, and stood in relief, looking like an actual cross to the inmates, and was eyed as such in their devotions. The panes were very small and lozenge-shaped, and soldered to one another with strips of lead: the like you may see to this day in some of our rural cottages. The chairs were rude and primitive, all but the arm-chair, whose back, at right angles with its seat, was so high that the sitter's head stopped two feet short of the top. This chair was of oak, and carved at the summit. There was a copper pail, that went in at the waist, holding holy water; and a little hand-besom to sprinkle it far and wide; and a long, narrow, but massive oak table, with a dwarf sticking to the rim by his teeth, his eyes glaring, and his claws in the air like a

pouncing vampire. Nature, it would seem, did not make Giles a dwarf out of malice prepense: she constructed a head and torso with her usual care, but just then her attention was distracted, and she left the rest to chance; the result was a human wedge, an inverted cone. He might with justice have taken her to task in the terms of Horace:

amphora cœpit
 Institui; currente rotâ cur urceus exit?

His centre was any thing but his centre of gravity. Bisected, upper Giles would have outweighed three lower Gileses. But this very disproportion enabled him to do feats that would have baffled Milo. His brawny arms had no weight to draw after them; so he could go up a vertical pole like a squirrel, and hang for hours from a bough by one hand like a cherry by its stalk. If he could have made a vacuum with his hands, as the lizard is said to do with its feet, he would have gone along a ceiling. Now, this pocket athlete was insanely fond of griping the dinner-table with both hands, and so swinging an hour at a time; and then—climax of delight! he would seize it with his teeth, and, taking off his hands, hold on like grim death by his huge ivories.

But all our joys, however elevating, suffer interruption. Little Kate caught Sampsonet in this posture, and stood aghast. She was her mother's daughter, and her heart beat with the furniture, not with the 12mo. gymnast.

"Oh, Giles! how can you? Mother would be vexed. It dents the table."

"Go and tell her, little tale-bearer," snarled Giles. "You are the one for making mischief."

"Am I?" inquired Kate, calmly; "that is news to me."

"The biggest in Tergou," growled Giles, fastening on again.

At this Kate sat quietly down and cried. Her mother

came in almost at that moment, and Giles hurled himself under the table, and there glared.

"What is to do now?" said the dame, sharply. Then turning her experienced eyes on Giles, and observing the position he had taken up, and a sheepish expression, she hinted at cuffing of ears.

"Nay, mother," said the girl; "it was but a foolish word Giles spoke. I had not noticed it at another time; but I was tired and in care for Gerard, you know."

"Let no one be in care for me," said a faint voice at the door, and in tottered Gerard, pale, dusty, and worn out; and, amid uplifted hands and cries of delight, curiosity and anxiety mingled, dropped almost fainting into the nearest chair.

Beating Rotterdam, like a covert, for Margaret, and the long journey afterward, had fairly knocked Gerard up. But elastic youth soon revived, and behold him the centre of an eager circle. First of all they must hear about the prizes. Then Gerard told them he had been admitted to see the competitors' works all laid out in an enormous hall—before the judges pronounced: "Oh, mother! oh, Kate! when I saw the goldsmiths' work, I had like to have fallen on the floor. I thought not all the goldsmiths on earth had so much gold, silver, jewels, and craft of design and facture. But, in sooth, all the arts are divine."

Then, to please the females, he described to them the reliquaries, feretories, calices, crosiers, crosses, pyxes, monstrances, and other wonders ecclesiastical, and the goblets, hanaps, watches, clocks, chains, brooches, etc., so that their mouths watered.

"But, Kate, when I came to the illuminated work from Ghent and Bruges, my heart sank. Mine was dirt by the side of it. For the first minute I could almost have cried; but I prayed for a better spirit, and presently I was able to enjoy them, and thank God for those lovely works, and for those skillful, patient craftsmen,

that I own my masters. Well, the colored work was so beautiful I forgot all about the black and white. But, next day, when all the other prizes had been given, they came to the writing, and whose name think you was called first?"

"Yours," said Kate.

The others laughed her to scorn.

"You may laugh," said Gerard, "but for all that Gerard Gerardssoen of Tergou was the name the herald shouted. I stood stupid; they thrust me forward. Every thing swam before my eyes. I don't know how I found myself kneeling on a cushion at the feet of the duke. He said something to me, but I was so fluttered I could not answer him. So then he put his hand to his side and did not draw a glaive and cut off my dull head, but gave me a gold medal, and there it is." There was a yell and almost a scramble. "And then he gave me fifteen great bright golden angels. I had seen one before, but I never handled one. Here they are."

"Oh, Gerard! oh, Gerard!"

"There is one for you, our eldest; and one for you, Sybrandt, and for you, Little Mischiev; and two for you, Little Lily, because God has afflicted you; and one for myself to buy colors and vellum; and nine for her that cursed us all, and risked the two crowns upon poor Gerard's hand."

The gold drew out their several characters. Cornelis and Sybrandt clutched each his coin with one glare of greediness and another glare of envy at Kate, who had got two pieces. Giles seized his and rolled it along the floor and gamboled after it. But Kate put down her crutches and sat down, and held out her little arms to Gerard with a heavenly gesture of love and tenderness, and the mother, fairly benumbed at first by the shower of gold that fell on her apron, now cried out, "Leave kissing him, Kate, he is my son, not yours. Ah, Gerard, my child! I have not loved you as you deserved."

Then Gerard threw himself on his knees beside her, and she flung her arms round him and wept for joy and pride, upon his neck.

“Good lad! good lad!” cried the hosier, with some emotion. “I must go and tell the neighbors. Lend me the medal, Gerard, I’ll show it my good friend, Peter Buyskens; he is always regaling me with how his son Jorian won the tin mug a-shooting at the Butts.”

“Ay, do my man; and show Peter Buyskens one of the angels. Tell him there are fourteen more, where that came from. Mind you bring it me back!”

“Stay a minute, father, there is better news behind,” said Gerard, flushing with joy at the joy he caused.

“Better! Better than this?”

Then Gerard told his interview with the countess, and the house rang with joy.

“Now, God bless the good lady, and bless the Dame Van Eyck! a benefice, our son! My cares are at an end. Gerard, my good friend and master, now we two can die happy whenever our time comes. This dear boy will take our place, and none of these loved ones will want a home or a friend.”

From that hour Gerard was looked upon as the stay of the family. He was a son apart, but in another sense. He was always in the right, and nothing too good for him. Cornelis and Sybrandt became more and more jealous of him, and longed for the day he should go to his benefice: they would get rid of the favorite, and his reverence’s purse would be open to them. With these views he co-operated. The wound love had given him throbbed duller and duller. His success and the affection and admiration of his parents, made him think more highly of himself, and resent with more spirit Margaret’s ingratitude and discourtesy. For all that, she had power to cool him toward the rest of her sex, and now for every reason he wished to be ordained priest as soon as he could pass the intermediate orders. He knew the Vul-

gate already better than most of the clergy, and he studied the rubric and the dogmas of the church with his friends the monks; and, the first time the bishop came that way, he applied to be admitted "exorcist," the third step in holy orders. The bishop questioned him, and ordained him at once. He had to kneel, and, after a short prayer, the bishop delivered to him a little MS. full of exorcisms, and said: "Take this, Gerard, and have power to lay hands on the possessed, whether baptized or catechumens!" and he took it reverently, and went home invested by the church with power to cast out demons.

Returning home from the church, he was met by little Kate on her crutches.

"Oh, Gerard! who, think you, has been at our house seeking you? the Burgomaster himself."

Gerard started, and changed color.

"Ghysbrecht Van Swieten? What would he with me?"

"Nay, Gerard, I know not. But he was urgent to see you. You are to go to his house on the instant."

"Well, he is the Burgomaster: I must go: but it likes me not. Kate, I have seen him cast such a look on me as no friend casts. No matter; such looks forewarn the wise. Besides, he knows—"

"Knows what, Gerard?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"Kate, I'll go."

And he went to Ghysbrecht Van Swieten's house.

CHAPTER VII.

GHYSBRECHT VAN SWIETEN was an artful man. He opened on the novice with something quite wide of the mark he was really aiming at. "The town records,"

said he, "are crabbedly written, and the ink rusty with age." He offered Gerard the honor of transcribing them fair.

Gerard inquired what he was to be paid.

Ghysbrecht offered a sum that would have just purchased the pens, ink, and parchment.

"But, Burgomaster, my labor? Here is a year's work."

"Your labor! Call you marking parchment labor? Little sweat goes to that, I trow."

"'Tis labor, and skilled labor to boot: and that is better paid in all crafts than rude labor, sweat or no sweat. Besides, there's my time."

"Your time? Why what is time to you, at two-and-twenty?" Then fixing his eyes keenly on Gerard, to mark the effect of his words, he said: "Say, rather, you are idle grown. You are in love. Your body is with those chanting monks, but your heart is with Peter Brandt and his red-haired girl."

"I know no Peter Brandt."

This denial confirmed Ghysbrecht's suspicion that the caster out of demons was playing a deep game.

"Ye lie!" he shouted. "Did I not find you at her elbow, on the road to Rotterdam?"

"Ah!"

"Ah. And you were seen at Sevenbergen but t'other day."

"Was I?"

"Ay; and at Peter's house."

"At Sevenbergen?"

"Ay, at Sevenbergen."

Now, this was what in modern days is called a draw. It was a guess, put boldly forth as fact, to elicit by the young man's answer whether he had been there lately or not.

The result of the artifice surprised the crafty one. Gerard started up in a strange state of nervous excitement.

“Burgomaster,” said he, with trembling voice, “I have not been at Sevenbergen this three years, and I know not the name of those you saw me with, nor where they dwelt; but, as my time is precious, though you value it not, give you good-day.” And he darted out, with his eyes sparkling.

Ghysbrecht started up in huge ire; but he sank into his chair again.

“He fears me not. He knows something, if not all.”

Then he called hastily to his trusty servant, and almost dragged him to a window.

“See you yon man?” he cried. “Haste! Follow him! But let him not see you. He is young, but old in craft. Keep him in sight all day. Let me know whither he goes, and what he does.”

It was night when the servant returned.

“Well! well!” cried Van Swieten, eagerly.

“Master, the young man went from you to Sevenbergen.”

Ghysbrecht groaned.

“To the house of Peter the Magician.”

CHAPTER VIII.

“Look into your own heart and write!” said Herr Cant; and earth’s cuckoos echoed the cry. Look into the Rhine where it is deepest, and the Thames where it is thickest, and paint the bottom. Lower a bucket into a well of self-deception, and what comes up must be immortal truth, musn’t it? Now, in the first place no son of Adam ever reads his own heart at all, except by the habit acquired and the light gained from some years’ perusal of other hearts; and even then, with his acquired sagacity and reflected light, he can but spell and decipher his own heart, not read it fluently. Gerard was so young

and green that he needed no philosopherling to lead him into shallow water. Half way to Sevenbergen he looked into his own heart, and asked it why he was going to Sevenbergen. His heart replied without a moment's hesitation. We are going out of mere curiosity, to know why she jilted us, and to show her it has not broken our hearts, and that we are quite content with our honors and our benefice in prospectu, and don't want her or any of her fickle sex.

He soon found out Peter Brandt's cottage; and there sat a girl in the doorway, plying her needle, and a stalwart figure leaned on a long bow and talked to her. Gerard felt an unaccountable pang at the sight of him. However, the man turned out to be past fifty years of age, an old soldier, whom Gerard remembered to have seen shoot at the butts with admirable force and skill. Another minute and the youth stood before them. Margaret looked up and dropped her work, and uttered a faint cry, and was white and red by turns. But these signs of emotion were swiftly dismissed, and she turned far more chill and indifferent than she would if she had not betrayed this agitation.

"What! is it you, Master Gerard? What on earth brings you here, I wonder."

"I was passing by and saw you; so I thought I would give you good-day, and ask after your father."

"My father is well. He will be here anon."

"Then I may as well stay till he comes."

"As you will. Good Martin, step into the village and tell my father here is a friend of his."

"And not of yours?"

"My father's friends are mine."

"That is doubtful. It was not like a friend to promise to wait for me, and then make off the moment my back was turned. Cruel Margaret! you little know how I searched the town for you—how for want of you nothing was pleasant to me."

"These are idle words ; if you had desired my father's company, or mine, you would have come back. There I had a bed laid for you, sir, at my cousin's, and he would have made much of you, and, who knows, I might have made much of you too. I was in the humor that day. You will not catch me in the same mind again, neither you nor any young man, I warrant me."

"Margaret, I came back the moment the countess let me go ; but you were not there."

"Nay, you did not, or you had seen Hans Cloterman at our table ; we left him to bring you on."

"I saw no one there, but only a drunken man that had just tumbled down."

"At our table ? How was he clad ?"

"Nay, I took little heed : in sad-colored garb."

At this Margaret's face gradually lighted with a mixture of archness and happiness ; then assuming incredulity and severity, she put many shrewd questions, all of which Gerard answered most loyally. Finally the clouds cleared, and they guessed how the misunderstanding had come about. Then came a revulsion of tenderness, all the more powerful that they had done each other wrong ; and then, more dangerous still, came mutual confessions. Neither had been happy since ; neither ever would have been happy but for this fortunate meeting.

And Gerard found a MS. Vulgate lying open on the table, and pounced upon it like a hawk. MSS. were his delight ; but before he could get to it two white hands quickly came flat upon the page, and a red face confronted him.

"Nay, take away your hands, Margaret, that I may see where you are reading, and I will read there too at home ; so shall my soul meet yours in the sacred page. You will not ? Nay, then, I must kiss them away." And he kissed them so often, that for very shame they were fain to withdraw, and, lo ! the sacred book proved to be open at

An apple of gold in a net-work of silver.

"There, now," said she, "I had been hunting for it ever so long, and found it but even now—and to be caught!" and with a touch of inconsistency she pointed it out to Gerard with her white finger.

"Ay," said he, "but to-day it is all hidden in that great cap."

"It is a comely cap, I'm told by some."

"May be: but what it hides is beautiful."

"It is not: it is hideous."

"Well, it was beautiful at Rotterdam."

"Ay, every thing was beautiful that day."

And now Peter came in and welcomed Gerard cordially, and would have him to stay supper. And Margaret disappeared; and Gerard had a nice learned chat with Peter; and Margaret reappeared with her hair in her silver net, and shot a glance half arch half coy, and she glided about them, and spread supper, and beamed bright with gayety and happiness. And in the cool evening Gerard coaxed her out, and coaxed her on to the road to Tergou, and there they strolled up and down, hand in hand; and when he must go they pledged each other never to quarrel or misunderstand one another again; and they sealed the promise with a long loving kiss, and Gerard went home on wings.

From that day Gerard spent most of his evenings with Margaret, and the attachment deepened and deepened on both sides till the hours they spent together were the hours they lived; the rest they counted and underwent. And at the outset of this deep attachment all went smoothly; obstacles there were, but they seemed distant and small to the eyes of hope, youth, and love. The feelings and passions of so many persons, that this attachment would thwart, gave no warning smoke to show their volcanic nature and power. The course of true love ran smoothly, placidly, until it had drawn these two young hearts into its current forever, and then—

CHAPTER IX.

ONE bright morning unwonted velvet shone, unwonted feathers waved, and horses' hoofs glinted and rang through the streets of Tergou, and the windows and balconies were studded with wondering faces. The French ambassador was riding through to sport in the neighboring forest.

Besides his own suite he was attended by several servants of the Duke of Burgundy, lent to do him honor and minister to his pleasure. The duke's tumbler rode before him with a grave, sedate majesty that made his more noble companions seem light, frivolous persons. But ever and anon, when respect and awe neared the oppressive, he rolled off his horse so ignobly and funnily that even the ambassador was fain to burst out laughing. He also climbed up again by the tail in a way provocative of mirth, and so he played his part. Toward the tail of the pageant rode one that excited more attention still—the duke's leopard. A huntsman mounted on a Flemish horse of prodigious size and power carried a long box fastened to the rider's loins by straps curiously contrived, and on this box sat a huge leopard crouching. She was chained to the huntsman. The people admired her glossy hide and spots, and pressed near, and one or two were for feeling her and pulling her tail; then the huntsman shouted in a terrible voice, "Beware! At Antwerp one did but throw a handful of dust at her, and the duke made dust of him."

"Gramercy!"

"I speak sooth. The good duke shut him up in prison, in a cell under ground, and the rats cleaned the flesh off his bones in a night. Served him right for molesting the poor thing." There was a murmur of fear, and the

Tergovians shrank from tickling the leopard of their sovereign.

But an incident followed that raised their spirits again. The duke's giant, a Hungarian seven feet four inches high, brought up the rear. This enormous creature had, like some other giants, a treble fluty voice of little power. He was a vain fellow, and not conscious of this or any defect. Now it happened he caught sight of Giles sitting on the top of the balcony; so he stopped and began to make fun of him.

"Halloo! brother!" squeaked he, "I had nearly passed without seeing thee."

"*You* are plain enough to see," bellowed Giles, in his bass tones.

"Come on my shoulder, brother," squeaked Titan, and held out a shoulder-of-mutton fist to help him down.

"If I do I'll cuff your ears," roared the dwarf.

The giant saw the homuncule was irascible, and played upon him, being encouraged thereto by the shouts of laughter. He did not see that the people were laughing not at his wit, but at the ridiculous incongruity of the two voices—the gigantic feeble fife, and the petty, deep, loud drum, the mountain delivered of a squeak and the mole-hill belching thunder.

The singular duet came to as singular an end. Giles lost all patience and self-command, and being a creature devoid of fear, and in a rage to boot, he actually dropped upon the giant's neck, seized his hair with one hand, and punched his head with the other. The giant's first impulse was to laugh, but the weight and rapidity of the blows speedily corrected that inclination.

"He! he! Ah! ha! halloo! oh! ho! Holy saints! here! help! or I must throttle the imp! I can't! O Lord! I'll split your skull against the—" and he made a wild run backward at the balcony. Giles saw his danger, seized the balcony in time with both hands, and whipped over it just as the giant's head came against it with a

stunning crack. The people roared with laughter and exultation at the address of their little champion. The indignant giant seized two of the laughers, knocked them together like dumb-bells, shook them, and strewed them flat (Catherine shrieked, and threw her apron over Giles), then strode wrathfully away after the party. This incident had consequences no one then present foresaw: it made Mr. Giles a companion of princes. Its immediate results were agreeable. The Tergovians turned proud of him, and after this listened with more affability to his prayers for parchment. For Giles drove a regular trade with his brother Gerard in this article. That is to say, he went about and begged it gratis, and Gerard gave him coppers for it.

On the afternoon of the same day Catherine and her daughter were chatting together about their favorite theme—Gerard, his goodness, his benefice, and the brightened prospects of the whole family.

Their good luck had come to them in the very shape they would have chosen; besides the advantages of a benefice such as the Countess Charolois would not disdain to give, there was the feminine delight at having a priest, a holy man, in their own family. He will marry Cornelis, and Sybrandt: for they can marry (good housewives), now, if they will: “Gerard will take care of you and Giles when we are gone. Yes, mother, and we can confess to him instead of to a stranger,” said Kate.

“Ay, girl! and he can give the sacred oil to your father and me, and close our eyes, when our time comes.”

“Oh, mother! not for many, many years, I do pray Heaven. Pray don’t speak of that; it always makes me sad. I hope I shall go before you, mother dear. No! let us be gay to-day. I am out of pain, mother—quite out of all pain; it does seem so strange; and I feel so bright and happy, that— Mother, can you keep a secret?”

"Nobody better, child. Why, you know I can."

"Then I will show you something so beautiful. You never saw the like I trow. Only Gerard must never know; for I am sure he means to surprise us with it, he covers it up so, and sometimes he carries it away altogether."

Kate took her crutches and moved slowly away, leaving her mother in an exalted state of curiosity. She soon returned with something in a cloth, uncovered it, and there was a lovely picture of the Virgin, with all her insignia, and wearing her tiara over a wealth of beautiful hair, which flowed loose over her shoulders. Catherine, at first, was struck with awe.

"It is herself!" she cried; "it is the Queen of Heaven! I never saw one like her to my mind before."

"And her eyes, mother! lifted to heaven, as if they belonged there, and not to a mortal creature. And her beautiful hair of burning gold!"

"And to think I have a son that can make the saints live again upon a piece of wood!"

"The reason is, he is a young saint himself, mother. He is too good for this world; he is here to portray the blessed, and then to go away and be with them forever."

Ere they had half done admiring it a strange voice was heard at the door. By one of the furtive instincts of their sex they hastily hid the picture in the cloth, though there was no need. And the next moment in came, casting his eyes furtively around, a man that had not entered the house this ten years—Ghysbrecht Van Swieten.

The two women were so taken by surprise that they merely stared at him and at one another, and said, "The Burgomaster!" in a tone so expressive that Ghysbrecht felt compelled to answer it.

"Yes! I own the last time I came here was not on a friendly errand. Men love their own interest—Gerard's and mine were contrary. Well! let this visit atone the last. To-day I come on your business, and none of mine."

Catherine and her daughter exchanged a swift glance of contemptuous incredulity. They knew the man better than he thought. "It is about your son Gerard."

"Ay! ay! you want him to work for the town—for nothing. He told us."

"I come on no such errand. It is to let you know he has fallen into bad hands."

"Now Heaven and the saints forbid! Man, torture not a mother! Speak out, and quickly: speak ere you have time to coin falsehood: we know you."

Ghysbrecht turned pale at this affront, and spite mingled with the other motives that brought him here.

"Thus it is, then," said he, grinding his teeth, and speaking very fast. "Your son Gerard is more like to be a father of a family than a priest: he is forever with Margaret, Peter Brandt's red-haired girl, and loves her like a cow her calf."

Mother and daughter both burst out laughing. Ghysbrecht stared at them.

"What, you knew it?"

"Carry this tale to those who know not my son Gerard. Women are naught to him."

"Other women, mayhap. But this one is the apple of his eye to him, or will be, if you part them not, and soon. Come, dame, don't make me waste time and friendly counsel: my servant has seen them together a score times, handed, and reading babies in one another's eyes like—you know, dame—you have been young too."

"Kate, I am ill at ease. Yes, I have been young, and know how blind and foolish the young are. My heart! He has turned me sick in a moment. Oh, Kate, if it should be true!"

"No, no!" cried Kate, eagerly. "Gerard might love a young woman: all young men do: I can't think what they see in them to love so: but if he did he would let us know: he would not deceive us. You wicked man, you will kill my mother. No, dear mother, don't look

so! Gerard is too good to love a creature of earth. His love is for Our Lady and the saints. Ah! I will show you the pict— There: if his heart was earthly could he paint the Queen of Heaven like that?—look! look!” and she held the picture out triumphantly, and more radiant and beautiful in this moment of enthusiasm than ever dead picture was or will be, overpowered the Burgomaster with her eloquence and her feminine proof of Gerard’s purity. His eyes and mouth opened, and remained open: in which state they kept turning, face and all, as if on a pivot, from the picture to the women, and from the women to the picture.

“Why, it is herself!” he gasped.

“Isn’t it?” cried Kate, and her hostility was softened.

“You admire it? I forgive you for frightening us.”

“Am I in a mad-house?” said Ghysbrecht Van Swieten, thoroughly puzzled. “You show me a picture of the girl, and you say he painted it; and that is a proof he can not love her! Why, they all paint their sweet-hearts, painters do.”

“A picture of the girl?” exclaimed Kate, shocked. “Fie! this is not a girl; this is the Virgin Mary.”

“No; no, it is Margaret Brandt.”

“Oh, blind! It is the Queen of Heaven.”

“No; only of Sevenbergen village.”

“Profane man! behold her crown!”

“Silly child! look at her red hair! Would the Virgin be seen in red hair? She who had the pick of all the colors ten thousand years before the world began?”

At this moment an anxious face was insinuated round the edge of the open door: it was their neighbor Peter Buysken.

“What is to do?” said he, in a cautious whisper. “We can hear you all across the street. What on earth is to do?”

“Oh, neighbor! What is to do? Why, here is the Burgomaster blackening my Gerard.”

"Stop!" cried Van Swieten. "Peter Buysken is come in the nick of time. He knows father and daughter both; they cured him of the colic. Here, Peter, who is that? Now be silent, women, for one moment, if you can. Who is that?"

Peter gave a start. "Well, to be sure!" was all his reply.

"Who is it?" repeated Ghysbrecht, impetuously.

Peter Buysken smiled. "Why, you know as well as I do. But what have they put a crown on her for? I never saw her in a crown, for my part."

"Man alive! Can't you open your great jaws and just speak a wench's name, to oblige three people?"

"I'd do a great deal more to oblige one of you than that, Burgomaster. If it isn't as natural as life!"

"Curse the man! he won't, he won't—curse him!"

"Why, what have I done now?"

"Oh, sir!" said little Kate, "for pity's sake tell us; are these the features of one Margaret Brandt?"

"A mirror is not truer, my little maid."

"But is it she, sir, for very certain?"

"Why, don't I tell you it is?"

"Now, why couldn't you say so at once?" snarled Ghysbrecht.

"I did say so as plain as I could speak," snapped Peter; and they growled over this small bone of contention so zealously that they did not see Catherine and her daughter had thrown their aprons over their heads, and were rocking to and fro in deep distress. The next moment Gerard senior came in, and stood aghast. Catherine, though her face was covered, knew his footstep directly.

"That is my poor man," she sobbed. "Tell him, good Peter Buysken, for I have not the courage to."

Gerard turned pale. The presence of the Burgomaster in his house, after so many years of coolness, coupled with his wife's and daughter's distress, made him fear some heavy misfortune.

"Richart! Jacob!" he gasped.

"No! no!" said the Burgomaster; "it is nearer home, and nobody is dead or dying, old friend."

"God bless you, Burgomaster! Ah! something is gone off my breast that was like to choke me. Now, what is the matter?"

Ghysbrecht then told him all that he told the women, and showed the picture in evidence.

"Is that all!" said Gerard. "What are ye roaring and bellowing for? It is vexing, it is angering, but it is not like death nor even sickness. Boys will be boys. He will outgrow that disease: 'tis but skin deep."

But when Ghysbrecht told him that Margaret was a girl of good character; that it was not to be supposed she would be so intimate if marriage had not been spoken of between them, Gerard's brow darkened.

"Marriage? that shall never be," said he, sternly. "I'll stay that, ay, by force, if need be, as I would his hand lifted to cut his throat. I'd do what old John Koestein did t'other day."

"And what is that, in Heaven's name?" asked the mother, suddenly removing her apron.

It was the Burgomaster who replied:

"He made me shut young Albert Koestein up in the prison of the Stadthouse till he knocked under: it was not long. Forty-eight hours, all alone, on bread and water, cooled his hot stomach. 'Tell my father I am his humble servant,' says he, 'and let me into the sun once more—the sun is worth all the wenches in the world.'"

"Oh the cruelty of men!" sighed Catherine.

"As to that, the Burgomaster has no choice: it is the law. And if a father says, 'Burgomaster, lock up my son,' he must do it. A fine thing it would be if a father might not lock up his own son."

"Well, well! it won't come to that with me and my son. He never disobeyed me in his life: he never shall.

Where is he? It is past supper-time. Where is he, Kate?"

"Alas, I know not, father."

"I know," said Ghysbrecht; "he is at Sevenbergen. My servant met him on the road."

Supper passed in gloomy silence. Evening descended—no Gerard: eight o'clock came—no Gerard. Then the father sent all to bed except Catherine.

"You and I will walk abroad, wife, and talk over this new care."

"Abroad, Gerard, at this time! Whither?"

"Why on the road to Sevenbergen."

"Oh no, no hasty words, father! Poor Gerard! he never vexed you before."

"Fear me not. But it must end; and I am not one that trusts to-morrow with to-day's work."

The old couple walked hand in hand; for, strange as it may appear to some of my readers, the use of the elbow to couples walking was never discovered in Europe till centuries after this. They walked a long time in silence. The night was clear and balmy. Such nights, calm and silent, recall the past from the dead.

"It is a many years since we walked so late, my man," said Catherine, softly.

"Ay, sweetheart, more than we shall see again. (Is he never coming, I wonder?)"

"Not since our courting days, Gerard."

"No. Ay, you were a buxom lass then."

"And you were a comely lad, as ever a girl's eye stole a look at. I do suppose Gerard is with her now, as you used to be with me. Nature is strong, and the same in all our generations."

"Nay, I hope he has left her by now, confound her, or we shall be here all night."

"Gerard!"

"Well?"

"I have been happy with you, sweetheart, for all our rubs—much happier, I trow, than if I had—been—a—a—nun. You won't speak harshly to the poor child? One can be firm without being harsh."

"Surely."

"Have you been happy with me, my poor Gerard?"

"Why, you know I have. Friends I have known, but none like you. Buss me, wife!"

"A heart to share joy and grief with is a great comfort to man or woman. Isn't it?"

"It is so, my lass.

*'It doth joy double,
And halveth trouble,'*

runs the by-word. Ah! here comes the young fool."

Catherine trembled and held her husband's hand tight. The moon was bright, but they were in the shadow of some trees, and their son did not see them. He came singing in the moonlight, and his face shining.

CHAPTER X.

WHILE the burgomaster was exposing Gerard at Tergou, Margaret had a trouble of her own at Sevenbergen. It was a housewife's distress, but deeper than we can well conceive. She came to Martin Wittenhaagen, the old soldier, with tears in her eyes.

"Oh, Martin, there's nothing in the house, and Gerard is coming, and he is so thoughtless. He forgets to sup at home. When he puts down work then he runs to me straight, poor soul: and often he comes here quite faint. And to think I should have nothing to set before my servant that loves me so dear."

Martin scratched his head.

"What can I do?"

"It is Thursday; it is your day to shoot—sooth to say, I counted on you to-day."

"Nay," said the soldier, "I may not shoot when the duke or his friends are at the chase: read else. I am no scholar." And he took out of his pouch a parchment with a grand seal. It purported to be a stipend and a license given by Philip Duke of Burgundy to M. W. one of his archers, in return for services in the wars, and for a wound received at the duke's side. The stipend was four merks yearly to be paid by the duke's almoner, and the license was to shoot three arrows once a week, viz., on Thursday, and no other day, in any of the duke's forests in Holland, at any game but a seven-year-old buck or a doe carrying fawn, proviso that the duke should not be hunting on that day, or any of his friends. In this case Martin was not to go and disturb the woods on peril of his salary and head, etc.

Margaret sighed and was silent.

"Come, cheer up, mistress," said he, "for your sake I'll peril my carcass; I have done that for many a one that was not worth your fore-finger. It is no such mighty risk either. I'll but step into the skirts of the forest, here. It is odds but they drive a hare or a fawn within reach of my arrow."

"Martin, if I let you go you must promise me not to go far, and not to be seen; far better Gerard went supperless than ill should come to you, faithful Martin."

The required promise given, Martin took his bow and three arrows, and stole cautiously into the wood: it was scarce a furlong distant. The horns were heard faintly in the distance, and all the game was afoot. Come, thought Martin, I shall soon fill the pot, and no one be the wiser. He took his stand behind a thick oak that commanded a view of an open glade, and strung his bow—a truly formidable weapon. It was of English yew, six feet two inches high, and thick in proportion: and Martin, broad chested, with arms all iron and cord, and used to the bow from infancy, could draw a three-foot arrow to the head, and when it flew, the eye could scarce

follow it, and the bow-string twanged as musical as a harp. This bow had laid many a stout soldier low in the wars of the Hoecks and Cabbel-jaws. In those days a battle-field was not a cloud of smoke; the combatants were few but the deaths many; for they saw what they were about, and fewer bloodless arrows flew than bloodless bullets now. This tremendous weapon Martin now leveled at a hare. She came cantering, then sat sprightly, and her ears made a capital V. The arrow flew, the string twanged: but Martin had been in a hurry to pot her, and lost her by an inch: the arrow seemed to strike her, but it struck the ground close to her, and passed under her belly like a flash, and hissed along the short grass and disappeared. She jumped three feet perpendicular, and away at the top of her speed. "Bungler!" said Martin. A sure proof he was not an habitual bungler, or he would have blamed the hare. He had scarcely fitted another arrow to his string when a wood-pigeon settled on the very tree he stood under. Aha! thought he, you are small, but dainty. This time he took more pains; drew his arrow carefully, loosed it smoothly, and saw it, to all appearance, go clean through the bird, carrying feathers skyward like dust. Instead of falling at his feet, the bird, whose breast was torn, not fairly pierced, fluttered feebly away, and, by a great effort, rose above the trees, flew some fifty yards, and fell dead at last; but where he could not see for the thick foliage.

"Luck is against me," said he, despondently. But he fitted another arrow, and eyed the glade keenly. Presently he heard a bustle behind him, and turned round just in time to see a noble buck cross the open, but too late to shoot at him. He dashed his bow down with an imprecation. At that moment a long, spotted animal glided swiftly across after the deer; its belly seemed to touch the ground as it went. Martin took up his bow hastily, he recognized the duke's leopard. "The hunters will not be far from her," said he, "and I must not be seen."

He plunged into the wood, following the buck and leopard, for that was his way home. He had not gone far when he heard an unusual sound ahead of him—leaves rustling violently, and the ground trampled. An experienced huntsman, he suspected the cause, and hurried in the direction. He found the leopard on the buck's back, tearing him with teeth and claw, and the buck running in a circle and bounding convulsively, with the blood pouring down his hide. Then Martin formed a desperate resolution to have the venison for Margaret. He drew his arrow to the head, and buried it in the deer, who, spite of the creature on his back, bounded high into the air, and fell dead. The leopard went on tearing him as if nothing had happened.

Martin hoped that the creature would gorge itself with blood, and then let him take the venison. He waited some minutes, then walked resolutely up, and laid his hand on the buck's leg. The leopard gave a frightful growl, and left off sucking blood. She saw Martin's game, and was sulky and on her guard. What was to be done? Martin had heard that wild creatures can not stand the human eye. Accordingly he stood erect and fixed his on the leopard; the leopard returned a savage glance, and never took her eye off Martin. Then Martin, continuing to look the beast down, soon obtained an actual instead of a conventional result. The leopard flew at his head with a frightful yell, flaming eyes, and jaws and claws distended. He had but just time to catch her by the throat before her teeth could crush his face; one of her claws seized his shoulder and rent it, the other, aimed at his cheek, would have been more deadly still, but Martin was old-fashioned, and wore no hat but a scapulary of the same stuff as his jerkin, and this scapulary he had brought over his head like a hood; the brute's claw caught in the loose leather. Martin kept her teeth off his face with some difficulty, and griped her throat fiercely, and she kept rending his shoulder. It was like

blunt reaping-hooks grinding and tearing. The pain was fearful: but, instead of cowing the old soldier, it put his blood up, and he gnashed his teeth with rage almost as fierce as hers, and squeezed her neck with iron force. The two pair of eyes blazed at one another—and now the man's were almost as furious as the brute's. She found he was throttling her, and made a wild attempt to free herself, in which she dragged his cowl all over his face and blinded him, and tore her claw out of his shoulder, flesh and all: but still he throttled her with hand and arm of iron. Presently her long tail, that was high in the air, went down, and her body lost its elasticity, and he held a choked and powerless thing: he griped it still till all motion ceased, then dashed it to the earth; then, panting, removed his cowl: the leopard lay still at his feet with tongue protruding and bloody paw; and for the first time terror fell on Martin. "I am a dead man: I have slain the duke's leopard." He hastily seized a few handfuls of leaves and threw them over her; then shouldered the buck and staggered away, leaving a trail of blood all the way—his own and the buck's. He burst into Peter's house a horrible figure, bleeding and blood-stained, and flung the deer's carcass down.

"There, no questions," said he, "but broil me a steak of it; for I am faint."

Margaret did not see he was wounded: she thought the blood was all from the deer.

She busied herself at the fire, and the stout soldier stanchd and bound his own wound apart, and soon he and Gerard and Margaret were supping royally on broiled venison.

They were very merry; and Gerard, with wonderful thoughtfulness, had brought a flask of Scheidam, and under its influence Martin revived, and told them how the venison was got, and thence to the feats of his youth.

Their mirth was suddenly interrupted. Margaret's eye became fixed and fascinated, and her cheek pale with

fear. She gasped, and could not speak, but pointed to the window with trembling finger. Their eyes followed hers, and there in the twilight crouched a dark form with eyes like glow-worms.

It was the leopard!

While they stood petrified, fascinated by the eyes of green fire, there sounded in the wood a single deep bay. It was the bay of a blood-hound. Martin trembled at it.

"They have lost her, and laid muzzled blood-hounds on her scent. They will find her here, and the venison. Good-by, friends, Martin Wittenhaagen ends here."

Gerard seized his bow, and put it into the soldier's hands.

"Be a man," he cried, "shoot her, and fling her into the wood ere they come up. Who will know?"

More voices of hounds broke out, and nearer.

"Curse her!" cried Martin. "I spared her once; now she must die, or I, or both more likely;" and he reared his bow and drew his arrow to the head.

"No! no!" cried Margaret, and seized the arrow; it broke in half; the pieces fell on each side the bow. The air at the same time filled with the tongues of the hounds; they were hot upon the scent.

"What have you done, wench? You have put the halter round my throat."

"No!" cried Margaret. "I have saved you. Stand back from the window both. Your knife, quick!"

She seized his long pointed knife, almost tore it out of his girdle, and darted from the room. The house was now surrounded with baying dogs and shouting men.

The glow-worm eyes moved not.

CHAPTER XI.

MARGARET cut off a huge piece of venison, and ran to the window, and threw it to the green eyes of fire. They darted on it with a savage snarl: and there was a sound of rending and crunching: at this moment the hound uttered a bay so near and loud it rang through the house, and the three at the window shrank together. Then the leopard feared for her supper, and glided swiftly and stealthily away with it toward the woods, and the very next moment horses and men and dogs came helter-skelter past the window, and followed her full cry. Martin and his companions breathed again; the leopard was swift, and would not be caught within a league of their house.

To table once more, and Gerard drank to woman's wit: "'Tis stronger than man's force," said he.

"Ay," said Margaret, "when those she loves are in danger; not else."

To-night Gerard staid with her longer than usual, and went home prouder than ever of her, and happy as a prince. Some little distance from home, under the shadow of some trees, he encountered two figures; they almost barred his way.

It was his father and mother.

A cold chill fell on him.

He stopped and looked at them; they stood grim and silent. He stammered out some words of inquiry:

"What brought them out so late?"

"Why ask?" said his father; "you can guess why we are here."

"Oh, Gerard!" said his mother, with a voice full of reproach and yet of affection.

Gerard's heart quaked: he was silent.

Then his father pitied his confusion, and said to him :

"Nay, you need not to hang your head. You are not the first young fool that has been caught by a red cheek and a pair of blue eyes."

"No, no!" put in Catherine; "it was witchcraft. Peter the Magician is well known for that."

"Come, Sir Priest," resumed his father, "you know you must not meddle with women folk. But give us your promise to go no more to Sevenbergen, and here all ends; we won't be hard on you for one fault."

"I can't promise that, father."

"Not promise it, you young hypocrite?"

"Nay, father, call me not so. I lacked courage to tell you what I knew would vex you; and right grateful am I to that good friend, whoever he be, that has let you know. 'Tis a load off my mind. Yes, father, I love Margaret; and call me not a priest, for a priest I will never be. I will die sooner."

"That we shall see, young man. Come, gainsay me no more; you will learn what 'tis to offend a father."

Gerard held his peace, and the three walked home in gloomy silence, broken only by a deep sigh or two from Catherine.

From that hour the little house at Tergou was no longer the abode of peace. Gerard was taken to task next day before the whole family, and every voice was loud against him, except little Kate's and the dwarf's, who was apt to take his cue from her without knowing why. As for Cornelis and Sybrandt, they were bitterer than their father. Gerard was dismayed at finding so many enemies, and looked wistfully into his little sister's face; her eyes were brimming at the harsh words showered on one who but yesterday was the universal pet. But she gave him no encouragement; she turned her head away from him, and said :

"Dear, dear Gerard, pray to Heaven to cure you of this folly."

“What, are you against me too?” said Gerard, sadly, and he rose with a deep sigh, and left the house—and went to Sevenbergen.

The beginning of a quarrel, where the parties are bound by affection though opposed in interest and sentiment, is comparatively innocent; both are in the right at first starting, and then it is that a calm, judicious friend, capable of seeing both sides, is a gift from Heaven. For the longer the dissension endures, the wider and deeper it grows, by the fallibility and irascibility of human nature; these are not confined to either side, and finally the invariable end is reached—both in the wrong.

The combatants were unequally matched. Gerard Senior was angry, Cornelis and Sybrandt spiteful; but Gerard, having a larger and more cultivated mind, saw both sides where they saw but one, and had fits of irresolution, and was not wroth, but unhappy. He was lonely, too, in this struggle. He could open his heart to no one. Margaret was a high-spirited girl; he dared not tell her what he had to endure at home; she was capable of siding with his relations by resigning him, though at the cost of her own happiness. Margaret Van Eyck had been a great comfort to him on another occasion, but now he dared not make her his confidante. Her own history was well known. In early life she had many offers of marriage, but refused them all for the sake of that art to which a wife's and mother's duties are so fatal; thus she remained single, and painted with her brothers. How could he tell her that he declined the benefice she had got him, and declined it for the sake of that which at his age she had despised and sacrificed so lightly.

Gerard at this period bade fair to succumb. But the other side had a horrible ally in Catherine Senior. This good-hearted but uneducated woman could not, like her daughter, act quietly and firmly; still less could she act upon a plan. She irritated Gerard at times, and so helped him, for anger is a great sustainer of the courage; at

others she turned round in a moment and made onslaughts on her own forces. To take a single instance out of many. One day that they were all at home, Catherine and all, Cornelis said: "Our Gerard wed Margaret Brandt! Why, it is hunger marrying thirst."

"And what will it be when you marry?" cried Catherine. "Gerard can paint, Gerard can write, but what can you do to keep a woman, ye lazy loon? Naught but wait for your father's shoes. Oh, we can see why you and Sybrandt would not have the poor boy to marry. You are afraid he will come to us for a share of our substance. And suppose he does, and suppose we give it him; it isn't yours to say nay, and mayhap never will be."

On these occasions Gerard smiled sily, and picked up heart; and temporary confusion fell on Catherine's unfortunate allies. But at last, after more than six months of irritation, came the climax. The father told the son, before the whole family, he had ordered the Burgomaster to imprison him in the Stadthouse rather than let him marry Margaret. Gerard turned pale with anger at this, but by a great effort held his peace. His father went on to say, "And a priest you shall be before the year is out, nilly willy."

"Is it so?" cried Gerard. "Then hear me all. By God and St. Bavon I swear I will never be a priest while Margaret lives. Since force is to decide it, and not love and duty, try force, father; but force shall not serve you, for the day I see the Burgomaster come for me, I leave Tergou forever, and Holland too, and my father's house, where it seems I have been valued all these years, not for myself, but for what is to be got out of me."

And he flung out of the room white with anger and desperation.

"There!" cried Catherine, "that comes of driving young folk too hard. But men are crueller than tigers, even to their own flesh and blood. Now, Heaven forbid he should ever leave us, married or single."

As Gerard came out of the house, his cheeks pale and his heart panting, he met Richt Heynes; she had a message for him; Margaret Van Eyck desired to see him. He found the old lady seated grim as a judge. She wasted no time in preliminaries, but inquired coldly why he had not visited her of late; before he could answer, she said in a sarcastic tone, "I thought we had been friends, young sir."

At this Gerard looked the picture of doubt and consternation.

"It is because you never told her you were in love," said Richt Heynes, pitying his confusion.

"Silence, wench! Why should he tell us his affairs? We are not his friends; we have not deserved his confidence."

"Alas! my second mother," said Gerard, "I did not dare to tell you my folly."

"What folly? Is it folly to love?"

"I am told so every day of my life."

"You need not have been afraid to tell my mistress; she is always kind to true lovers."

"Madam—Richt—I was afraid because I was told—"

"Well? you were told—"

"That in your youth you scorned love, preferring art."

"I did, boy; and what is the end of it? Behold me here a barren stock, while the women of my youth have a troop of children at their side, and grandchildren at their knee. I gave up the sweet joys of wifedom and womanhood for what? for my dear brothers; they have gone and left me long ago—for my art; it has left me too. I have the knowledge still, but what avails that when the hand trembles. No, Gerard; I look on you as my son. You are good, you are handsome, you are a painter, though not like some I have known. I will never let you throw your youth away as I did mine: you shall marry this Margaret. I have inquired, and she is a good daughter. Richt here is a gossip. She has told

me all about it. But that need not hinder *you* to tell me."

Poor Gerard was overjoyed to be permitted to tell his love and his happiness, and, above all, to praise Margaret aloud, and to one who could understand what he loved in her.

Soon there were two pair of wet eyes over his story; and when the poor boy saw that, there were three.

Women are justly famous for courage. Theirs is not exactly the same quality as manly courage; that would never do, hang it all; we should have to give up trampling on them. No; it is a vicarious courage. They never take part in a bull-fight by any chance; but it is remarked that they sit at one unshaken by those tremors and apprehensions for the combatants to which the male spectator—feeble-minded wretch!—is subject. Nothing can exceed the resolution with which they have been known to send forth men to battle: as some witty dog says, "*Les femmes sont très braves avec le peau d'autrui.*"

By this trait Gerard now profited. Margaret and Richt were agreed that a man should always take the bull by the horns. Gerard's only course was to marry Margaret Brandt off-hand; the old people would come to after a while, the deed once done. Whereas, the longer this misunderstanding continued on its present footing, the worse for all parties, especially for Gerard.

"See how pale and thin they have made him among them."

"Indeed you are, Master Gerard," said Richt. "It makes a body sad to see a young man so wasted and worn. Mistress, when I met him in the street to-day, I had like to have burst out crying—he was so changed."

"And I'll be bound the others keep their color: eh, Richt? such as it is."

"Oh, I see no odds in them."

"Of course not. We painters are no match for boors."

We are glass, they are stone. We can't stand the worry, worry, worry of little minds; and it is not for the good of mankind we should be exposed to it. It is hard enough, God knows, to design and paint a master-piece, without having gnats and flies stinging us to death into the bargain."

Exasperated as Gerard was by his father's threat of violence, he listened to these friendly voices telling him his most prudent course was rebellion. But though he listened he was not convinced.

"I do not fear my father's violence," he said, "but I do fear his anger. When it came to the point he would not imprison me. I would marry Margaret to-morrow if that was my only fear. No; he would disown me. I should take Margaret from her father, and give her a poor husband, who would never thrive, weighed down by his parent's curse. Oh, madam! I sometimes think if I could but marry her secretly, and then take her away to some country where my craft is better paid than in this; and after a year or two, when the storm had blown over, you know, could come back with money in my purse, and say, 'My dear parents, we do not seek your substance, we but ask you to love us once more as you used, and as we have never ceased to love you'—but, alas! I shall be told these are the dreams of an inexperienced young man."

The old lady's eyes sparkled.

"It is no dream, but a piece of wonderful common sense in a boy; it remains to be seen whether you have spirit to carry out your own thought. There is a country, Gerard, where certain fortune awaits you at this moment. Here the arts freeze, but there they flourish, as they never yet flourished in any age or land."

"It is Italy!" cried Gerard. "It is Italy!"

"Yes, Italy! where painters are honored like princes, and scribes are paid three hundred crowns for copying a single manuscript. Know you not that his Holiness the Pope has written to every land for skillful scribes to copy

the hundreds of precious manuscripts that are pouring into that favored land from Constantinople, whence learning and learned men are driven by the barbarian Turks."

"Nay, I know not that; but it has been the dream and hope of my life to visit Italy, the queen of all the arts. Oh, madam! but the journey, and we are all so poor."

"Find you the heart to go, I'll find the means. I know where to lay my hand on ten golden angels to take you to Rome; and the girl will go with you if she loves you as she ought."

They sat till midnight over this theme. And, after that day, Gerard recovered his spirits, and seemed to carry some secret talisman against all the gibes and the harsh words that flew about his ears at home.

Besides the money she procured him for the journey, Margaret Van Eyck gave him money's worth. Said she, "I will tell you secrets that I learned from masters that are gone from me, and have left no fellow behind. Even the Italians know not every thing; and what I tell you now in Tergou you may sell dear in Florence. Note my brother John's pictures: time, which fades all other paintings, leaves his colors bright as the day they left the easel. The reason is, he did nothing blindly, nothing in a hurry. He trusted to no hireling to grind his colors; he did it himself, or saw it done. His panel was prepared, and prepared again—I will show you how—a year before he laid his color on. Most of them are quite content to have their work sucked up and lost sooner than not be in a hurry—bad painters are always in a hurry. Above all, Gerard, I warn you never boil your oil; boiling it melts that vegetable dross into its very heart, which it is our business to clear away; for impure oil is death to color. No; take your oil and pour it into a bottle with water. In a day or two the water will turn muddy: that is muck from the oil. Pour the dirty water carefully away, and add fresh. When that is poured

away, you will fancy the oil is clear. You are mistaken. Richt, fetch me that!" Richt brought a glass trough with a glass lid fitting tight. "When your oil has been washed in bottle, put it into this trough with water, and put the trough in the sun all day. You will soon see the water turbid again. But mark, you must not carry this game too far, or the sun will turn your oil to varnish. When it is as clear as crystal, and not too drying, drain carefully, and cork it up tight. Grind your own prime colors, and lay them on with this oil, and they shall live. Hubert would put sand or salt in the water to clear the oil quicker. But John used to say, 'Water will do it best, if you but give water time.' Jan Van Eyck was never in a hurry, and that is why the world will not forget *him* in a hurry."

This and several other receipts—*quæ nunc perscribere longum est*—Margaret gave him with sparkling eyes, and Gerard received them like a legacy from Heaven, so interesting are some things that read uninteresting. Thus provided with money and knowledge, Gerard decided to marry and fly with his wife to Italy. Nothing remained now but to inform Margaret Brandt of his resolution, and to publish the bans as quietly as possible. He went to Sevenbergen earlier than usual on both these errands. He began with Margaret; told her of the Dame Van Eyck's goodness, and the resolution he had come to at last, and invited her co-operation.

She refused it plump.

CHAPTER XII.

"No, Gerard; you and I have never spoken of your family, but when you come to marriage—" She stopped, then began again. "I do think your father has no objection to me more than to another. He told Peter Buysken as much, and Peter told me. But so long as

he is so bent on your being a priest (you ought to have told me this instead of I you), I could not marry you, Gerard, dearly as I love you."

Gerard strove in vain to shake this resolution. He found it very easy to make her cry, but impossible to make her yield. Then Gerard was impatient and unjust.

"Very well!" he cried; "then you are on their side, and you will drive me to be a priest, for this must end one way or another. My parents hate me in earnest, but my lover only loves me in jest!"

And with this wild, bitter speech, he flung away home again, and left Margaret weeping.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHEN a man misbehaves, the effect is curious on a girl who loves him sincerely. It makes her pity him. This, to some of us males, seems any thing but logical. The fault is in our own eye, the logic is too swift for us. The girl argues thus: "How unhappy, how vexed, poor * * * must be; *him* to misbehave!"

Margaret was full of this sweet womanly pity, when, to her great surprise, scarce an hour and a half after he left her, Gerard came running back to her with the fragments of a picture in his hand, and panting with anger and grief.

"There, Margaret! see! see! the wretches! Look at their spite! They have cut your portrait to pieces."

Margaret looked. And, sure enough, some malicious hand had cut her portrait into five pieces. She was a good girl, but she was not ice; she turned red to her very forehead.

"Who did it?"

"Nay, I know not. I dared not ask; for I should hate the hand that did it, ay, till my dying day. My poor Margaret! The beasts! the ruffians! Six months' work

cut out of my life, and nothing to show for it now. See, they have hacked through your very face—the sweet face that every one loves who knows it. Oh, heartless, merciless vipers!”

“Never mind, Gerard,” said Margaret, panting. “Since this is how they treat you for my sake—you rob him of my portrait, do you? Well, then I give him the original.”

“Oh, Margaret!”

“Yes, Gerard; since they are so cruel, I will be the kinder: forgive me for refusing you. I will be your wife—to-morrow, if it is your pleasure.”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE bans of marriage had to be read three times, as with us; but they were read on week-days, and the young couple easily persuaded the curé to do the three readings in twenty-four hours: he was new to the place, and their looks spoke volumes in their favor. They were cried on Monday at matins and at vespers; and, to their great delight, nobody from Tergou was in the church. The next morning they were both there palpitating with anxiety, when, to their horror, a stranger stood up and forbade the bans, on the score that the parties were not of age, and their parents not consenting.

Outside the church door, Margaret and Gerard held a trembling and almost despairing consultation; but, before they could settle any thing, the man who had done them so ill a turn approached, and gave them to understand that he was very sorry to interfere; that his inclination was to further the happiness of the young: but that in point of fact his only means of getting a living was by forbidding bans: what then? The young people give me a crown, and I undo my work handsomely; tell the curé I was misinformed; and all goes smoothly.

"A crown? I will give you a golden angel to do this," said Gerard, eagerly. The man consented as eagerly, and went with Gerard to the curé, and told him he had made a ridiculous mistake, which a sight of the parties had rectified. On this the curé agreed to marry the young couple next day at 10: and the professional obstructor of bliss went home with Gerard's angel. Like most of these very clever knaves, he was a fool, and proceeded to drink his angel at a certain hostelry in Tergou, where was a green devoted to archery and the common sports of the day. There, being drunk, he bragged of his day's exploit; and who should be there, imbibing every word, but a great frequenter of the sport, the ne'er-do-weel Sybrandt. Sybrandt ran home to tell his father; his father was not at home; he was gone to Rotterdam to buy cloth of the merchants. Catching his elder brother's eye, he made him a signal to come out, and told him what he had heard.

There are black sheep in nearly every large family: and these two were Gerard's black brothers. Idleness is vitiating: waiting for the death of those we ought to love is vitiating: and these two one-idea'd curs were ready to tear any one to death that should interfere with that miserable inheritance; which was their thought by day and their dream by night. Their parents' parsimony was a virtue; it was accompanied by industry, and its motive was love of their offspring: but in these perverse and selfish hearts that homely virtue was perverted into avarice, than which no more fruitful source of crimes is to be found in nature.

They put their heads together, and agreed not to tell their mother, whose sentiments were so uncertain, but to go first to the Burgomaster. They were cunning enough to see that he was averse to the match, though they could not divine why.

Ghysbrecht Van Swieten saw through them at once; but he took care not to let them see through him. He

heard their story; and putting on magisterial dignity and coldness, he said:

"Since the father of the family is not here, his duty devolves on me, who am the father of the town. I know your father's mind; leave all to me: and, above all, tell no woman a word of all this, least of all the women that are in your own house: for chattering tongues mar the wisest counsels."

So he dismissed them a little superciliously: he was ashamed of his confederates.

On their return home they found their brother Gerard seated on a low stool at their mother's knee: she was caressing his hair with her hand, speaking very kindly to him, and promising to take his part with his father and thwart his love no more. The main cause of this change of mind was one that the reader will comprehend, if he has ever known a woman of this kind. It was this. She it was who in a moment of female irritation had cut Margaret's picture to pieces. She had watched the effect with some misgivings, and had seen Gerard turn pale as death, and sit motionless like a bereaved creature, with the pieces in his hands, and his eyes fixed on them till tears came and blinded them. Then she was terrified at what she had done; and next her heart smote her bitterly; and she wept sore apart: but, being what she was, dared not own it, but said to herself, "I'll not say a word, but I'll make it up to him." And her bowels yearned over her son, and her feeble violence died a natural death, and she was transferring her fatal alliance to Gerard when the two black sheep came in. Gerard knew nothing of the immediate cause; on the contrary, her kindness made this novice ashamed of a suspicion he had for a moment entertained that she was the depredator; and he kissed her again and again, and went to bed happy as a prince to think his mother was his mother once more at the very crisis of his fate.

The next morning, at 10 o'clock, Gerard and Margaret were in the church at Sevenbergen—he radiant with joy, she with blushes. Peter was also there, and Martin Wittenhaagen, but no other friend. Secrecy was every thing. Margaret had declined Italy. She could not leave her father; he was too learned and too helpless. But it was settled they should retire into Flanders for a few weeks until the storm should be blown over at Ter-gou. The curé did not keep them waiting long, though it seemed an age. Presently he stood at the altar, and called them to him. They went hand in hand, the happiest in Holland. The curé opened his book.

But ere he had uttered a single word of the sacred rite, a harsh voice cried "Forbear!" And the constables of Ter-gou came up the aisle and seized Gerard in the name of the law. Martin's long knife flashed out directly.

"Forbear, man!" cried the Priest. "What! draw your weapon in a church! And you who interrupt this holy sacrament—what means this impiety?"

"There is no impiety, father," said the Burgomaster's servant respectfully. "This young man would marry against his father's will, and his father has prayed our Burgomaster to deal with him according to the law. Let him deny it if he can."

"Is this so, young man?"

Gerard hung his head.

"We take him to Rotterdam to abide the sentence of the duke."

At this Margaret uttered a cry of despair, and the young creatures, who were so happy a moment ago, fell to sobbing in one another's arms so piteously that the instruments of oppression drew back a step, and were ashamed; but one of them that was good-natured stepped up under pretense of separating them, and whispered:

"Rotterdam? it's a lie! We but take him to our Stadthouse."

They took him away on horseback, on the road to

Rotterdam ; and, after a dozen halts, and by sly detours, to Tergou. Just outside the town they were met by a rude vehicle covered with canvas. Gerard was put into this, and about five in the evening was secretly conveyed into the prison of the Stadthouse. He was taken up several flights of stairs, and thrust into a small room lighted only by a narrow window, with a vertical iron bar. The whole furniture was a huge oak chest.

Imprisonment in those days was one of the high roads to death. It is horrible in its mildest form ; but in these days it implied cold, unbroken solitude, torture, starvation, and often poison. Gerard felt he was in the hands of an enemy.

“ Oh, the look that man gave me on the road to Rotterdam. There is more here than my father’s wrath. I doubt I shall see no more the light of day.” And he kneeled down and commended his soul to God.

Then he rose and sprang at the iron bar of the window and clutched it. This enabled him, by pressing his knees against the wall, to look out. It was but for a minute ; but in that minute he saw a sight that none but a captive can appreciate.

He saw Martin Winterhaagen’s back.

Martin was sitting quietly fishing in the brook near the Stadthouse.

Gerard sprang again at the window, and whistled. Martin instantly showed that he was watching much harder than he was fishing. He turned hastily round and saw Gerard ; made him a signal, and taking up his line and bow went quickly off.

Gerard saw by this that his friends were not idle, yet he had rather Martin had staid ; the very sight of him was a comfort. He held on, looking at the soldier’s retiring form as long as he could ; then falling back somewhat heavily, wrenched the rusty iron bar—held only by rusty iron nails—away from the stone-work just as Ghysbrecht Van Swieten opened the door stealthily behind

him. The Burgomaster's eye fell instantly on the iron, and then glanced at the window; but he said nothing. The window was eighty feet high; and if Gerard had a fancy for jumping out, why should he balk it? He brought a brown loaf and a pitcher of water, and set them on the chest in solemn silence. Gerard's first impulse was to brain him with the iron bar, and fly down the stairs; but the Burgomaster seeing something wicked in his eye, gave a little cough, and three stout fellows, armed, showed themselves directly at the door.

"My orders are to keep you thus until you shall bind yourself by an oath to leave Margaret Brandt and return to the church to which you have belonged from infancy."

"Death sooner!"

"As you please." And the Burgomaster retired.

Martin went with all speed to Sevenbergen; there he found Margaret pale and agitated, but full of resolution and energy. She was just finishing a letter to the Countess Charolois, appealing to her against the violence and treachery of Ghysbrecht.

"Courage!" cried Martin, on entering. "I have found him. He is in the haunted tower; right at the top of it. Ay! I know the place: many a poor fellow has gone up there straight, and come down feet foremost."

He then told them how he had looked up and seen Gerard's face at a window that was like a slit in the wall.

"Oh, Martin! how did he look?"

"What mean you? He looked like Gerard Gerardssoen."

"But was he pale?"

"A little."

"Looked he anxious? Looked he like one doomed?"

"Nay, nay; as bright as a pewter pot."

"You mock me. Ah! then that was at sight of you. He counts on us. Oh! what shall we do? Martin, good friend, take this at once to Rotterdam."

Martin held out his hand for the letter, but was interrupted.

Peter had sat silent all this time, but pondering, and, contrary to his usual custom, keenly attentive to what was going on around him.

"Put not your trust in princes," said he.

"Alas! what else have we to trust in?"

"Knowledge."

"Alas, father! your learning will not serve us here."

"How know you that? Wit has been too strong for iron bars ere to-day."

"Ay, father; but nature is stronger than wit, and she is against us. Think of the height! No ladder in Holland might reach."

"I need no ladder: what I need is a gold crown."

"Nay, I have money, for that matter. I have nine angels. Gerard gave them me to keep; but what do they avail? The Burgomaster will not be bribed to let Gerard free."

"What do they avail? Give me but one crown, and the young man shall sup with us this night."

Peter spoke so eagerly and confidently, that for a moment Margaret felt hopeful; but she caught Martin's eye dwelling upon him with an expression of benevolent contempt.

"It passes the powers of man's invention," said she, with a deep sigh.

"Invention?" cried the old man. "A fig for invention! What need we invention at this time of day? Every thing has been said that is to be said, and done that can be done. I shall tell you how a Florentine knight was shut up in a tower higher than Gerard's: yet did his faithful squire stand at the tower foot and get him out, with no other engine than that in your hand, Martin, and certain kickshaws I shall buy for a crown."

Martin looked at his bow, and turned it round in his hand; and seemed to interrogate it. But the examination left him as incredulous as before.

Then Peter told them his story, how the faithful squire got the knight out of a high tower at Brescia. The manœuvre, like most things that are really scientific, was so simple, that now their wonder was they had taken for impossible a thing which was not even difficult.

The letter never went to Rotterdam. They trusted to Peter's learning and their own dexterity.

It was nine o'clock on a clear moonlight night; Gerard, senior, was still away; the rest of his little family had been some time abed.

A figure stood by the dwarf's bed. It was white, and the moonlight shone on it.

With an unearthly noise, between a yell and a snarl, the gymnast rolled off his bed and under it by a single unbroken movement. A soft voice followed him in his retreat.

"Why, Giles, are you afraid of me?"

At this, Giles's head peeped cautiously out, and he saw it was only his sister Kate.

She put her finger to her lips. "Hush! lest the wicked Cornelis or the wicked Sybrandt hear us."

She then revealed to Giles that she had heard Cornelis and Sybrandt mention Gerard's name; and being herself in great anxiety at his not coming home all day, had listened at their door, and had made a fearful discovery. Gerard was in prison, in the haunted tower of the Stadthouse. He was there it seemed by their father's authority. But here must be some treachery; for how could their father have ordered this cruel act? he was at Rotterdam. She ended by entreating Giles to bear her company to the foot of the haunted tower, to say a word of comfort to poor Gerard, and let him know their father was absent, and would be sure to release him on his return.

"Dear Giles, I would go alone, but I am afraid of the spirits that men say do haunt the tower: but with you I shall not be afraid."

“Nor I with you,” said Giles. “I don’t believe there are any spirits in Tergou. I never saw one. This last was the likest one ever I saw; and it was only you, Kate, after all.”

In less than half an hour Giles and Kate opened the house door cautiously and issued forth. She made him carry a lantern, though the night was bright. “The lantern gives me more courage against the evil spirits,” said she.

The first day of imprisonment is very trying, especially if to the horror of captivity is added the horror of utter solitude. I observe that in our own day a great many persons commit suicide during the first twenty-four hours of the solitary cell. This is doubtless why our Jairi abstain so carefully from the impertinence of watching their little experiment upon the human soul at that stage of it.

As the sun declined, Gerard’s heart too sank and sank: with the waning light, even the embers of hope went out. He was faint, too, with hunger; for he was afraid to eat the food Ghysbrecht had brought him: and hunger alone crows men. He sat upon the chest, his arms and his head drooping before him, a picture of despondency. Suddenly something struck the wall beyond him very sharply, and then rattled on the floor at his feet. It was an arrow; he saw the white feather. A chill ran through him—they meant then to assassinate him from the outside. He crouched. No more missiles came. He crawled on all fours, and took up the arrow: there was no head to it. He uttered a cry of hope: had a friendly hand shot it? He took it up, and felt it all over: he found a soft substance attached to it. Then one of his eccentricities was of grand use to him. His tinder-box enabled him to strike a light: it showed him two things that made his heart bound with delight, none the less thrilling for being somewhat vague. Attached to the

arrow was a skein of silk, and on the arrow itself were words written.

How his eye devoured them, his heart panting the while!

Well beloved, make fast the silk to thy knife and lower to us; but hold thy end fast; then count an hundred and draw up.

Gerard seized the oak chest, and with almost super-human energy dragged it to the window: a moment ago he could not have moved it. Standing on the chest and looking down he saw figures at the tower foot. They were so indistinct they looked like one huge form. He waved his bonnet to them with trembling hand: then he undid the silk rapidly but carefully, and made one end fast to his knife, and lowered it till it ceased to draw. Then he counted a hundred. Then pulled the silk carefully up: it came up a little heavier. At last he came to a large knot, and by that knot a stout whipcord was attached to the silk. What might this mean? While he was puzzling himself Margaret's voice came up to him, low but clear. "Draw up, Gerard, till you see liberty in your hand." At the word Gerard drew the whipcord line up, and drew and drew till he came to another knot, and found a cord of some thickness take the place of the whipcord. He had no sooner begun to draw this up than he found that he had now a heavy weight to deal with. Then the truth suddenly flashed on him, and he went to work, and pulled and pulled till the perspiration rolled down him: the weight got heavier and heavier, and at last he was well-nigh exhausted; looking down he saw in the moonlight a sight that revived him: it was as it were a great snake coming up to him out of the deep shadow cast by the tower. He gave a shout of joy, and a score more wild pulls, and lo! a stout new rope touched his hand: he hauled and hauled, and dragged the end into his power, and instantly passed it

through both handles of the chest in succession, and knotted it firmly; then sat for a moment to recover his breath and collect his courage. The first thing was to make sure that the chest was sound, and capable of resisting his weight poised in mid-air. He jumped with all his force upon it. At the third jump the whole side burst open, and out scuttled the contents, a host of parchments.

After the first start and misgiving this gave him, Gerard comprehended that the chest had not burst but opened: he had doubtless jumped upon the secret spring. Still it shook in some degree his confidence in the chest's powers of resistance; so he gave it an ally: he took the iron bar and fastened it with the small rope across the large rope, and across the window. He now mounted the chest, and from the chest put his foot through the window, and sat half in and half out, with one hand on that part of the rope which was inside. It was a nervous moment; but the free air breathed on his face and gave him the courage to risk what we must all lose one day—for liberty. Many dangers awaited him, but the greatest was the first getting on to the rope outside. Gerard reflected. Finally he put himself in the attitude of a swimmer, his body to the waist being in the prison, his legs outside. Then holding the inside rope with both hands, he felt with his feet for the outside rope, and when he had got it he worked it in between the palms of his feet, and kept it there tight: then he put his left hand on the sill and gradually wriggled out. Then he seized the iron bar and for one fearful moment hung outside from it by his right hand, while his left hand seized the rope down at his knees. It was too tight against the wall for his fingers to get round it higher up. The next moment he left the bar and swiftly seized the rope with the right hand too; but in this manœuvre his body necessarily descended about a yard, and a stifled cry came up from below. Gerard hung in mid-air. He clenched his teeth,

and nipped the rope tight with his feet and gripped it with his hands, and went down slowly hand below hand. He passed by one huge rough stone after another. He saw there was green moss on one or two. He looked up and he looked down. The moon shone upon his prison window: it seemed very near. The fluttering figures below seemed an awful distance. It made him dizzy to look down: so he fixed his eyes steadily on the wall close to him, and went slowly down, down, down.

He passed a rusty slimy streak on the wall, it was some ten feet long. The rope made his hands very hot. He stole another look up.

The prison window was a good way off, now.

Down—down—down—down.

The rope made his hands sore.

He looked up. The window was so distant, he ventured now to turn his eyes downward again: and then, not more than thirty feet below him were Margaret and Martin, their faithful hands upstretched to catch him should he fall. He could see their eyes and their teeth shine.

"Take care, Gerard! Oh, take care! Look not down."

"Fear me not," cried Gerard, joyfully, and eyed the wall, but came down faster.

In another minute his feet were at their hands. They seized him ere he touched the ground, and all three clung together in one rapturous, panting embrace.

"Hush! away in silence, dear one."

They stole along the shadow of the wall.

But ere they had gone many yards suddenly a stream of light shot from an angle of the building, and lay across their path like a barrier of fire, and they heard whispers and footsteps close at hand.

"Back!" hissed Martin. "Keep in the shade."

They hurried back, passed the dangling rope, and made for a little square projecting tower. They had barely

rounded it when the light shot trembling past them, and flickered uncertainly into the distance.

"A lantern!" groaned Martin, in a whisper. "They are after us."

"Give me my knife," whispered Gerard. "I'll never be taken alive."

"No, no!" murmured Margaret: "is there no way out where we are?"

"None, none! but I carry six lives at my shoulder:" and with the word, Martin strung his bow, and fitted an arrow to the string: "in war never wait to be struck: I will kill one or two ere they shall know where their death comes from:" then, motioning his companions to be quiet, he began to draw his bow, and ere the arrow was quite drawn to the head, he glided round the corner ready to loose the string the moment the enemy should offer a mark.

Gerard and Margaret palpitated. They had never seen life taken.

CHAPTER XV.

"I HOPE 'tis the Burgomaster that carries the light," said the escaped prisoner, panting with a strange mixture of horror and exultation. The soldier, he knew, would send an arrow through a burgher or a burgomaster, as he would through a boar in a wood.

But who may foretell the future, however near? The bow, instead of remaining firm and loosing the deadly shaft, was seen to waver first, then shake violently, and the stout soldier staggered back to them, his knees knocking and his cheeks blanched with fear. He let his arrow fall, and clutched Gerard's shoulder.

"Let me feel flesh and blood," he gasped: "the haunted tower! the haunted tower!"

His terror communicated itself to Margaret and Ge-

rard. They could hardly find breath to ask him what he had seen.

"Hush!" he cried, "it will hear you. *Up* the wall! it is going *up* the wall! Its head is on fire. *Up* the wall, as mortal creatures walk upon green sward. If you know a prayer, say it! For hell is loose to-night."

"I have power to exorcise spirits," said Gerard, trembling. "I will venture forth."

"Go alone, then!" said Martin, "I have looked on't once and live."

Gerard stepped forth, and Margaret seized his hand and held it convulsively, and they crept out.

Sure enough, a sight struck their eyes that benumbed them as they stood. Half way up the tower, a creature with fiery head, like an enormous glow-worm, was going steadily up the wall: the body was dark, but its outline visible, and the whole creature not much less than four feet long.

At the foot of the tower stood a thing in white, that looked exactly like the figure of a female. Gerard and Margaret palpitated with awe.

"The rope—the rope! It is going up the rope—not the wall," gasped Gerard.

As they gazed, the glow-worm disappeared in Gerard's late prison, but its light illuminated the cell inside and reddened the window. The white figure stood motionless below.

Such as can retain their senses after the first prostrating effect of the supernatural are apt to experience terror in one of its strangest forms, a wild desire to fling themselves upon the terrible object. It fascinates them as the snake the bird. The great tragedian Macready used to render this finely in Macbeth at Banquo's second appearance. He flung himself with averted head at the horrible shadow. This strange impulse now seized Margaret. She put down Gerard's hand quietly, and stood fascinated; then, all in a moment, with a wild cry, dart-

ed toward the spectre. Gerard, not aware of the natural impulse I have spoken of, never doubted the evil one was drawing her to her perdition. He fell on his knees.

"Exorcizo vos. In nomine beatæ Mariæ, exorcizo vos."

While he was shrieking his incantations in extremity of terror, to his infinite relief he heard the spectre utter a feeble cry of fear. To find that hell had also its little weaknesses was encouraging. He redoubled his exorcisms, and presently he saw the shape kneeling at Margaret's knees, and heard it praying piteously for mercy.

Poor little spectre! It took Margaret for the ill spirit of the haunted tower, come flying out on it—to damn it.

Kate and Giles soon reached the haunted tower. Judge their surprise when they found a new rope dangling from the prisoner's window to the ground.

"I see how it is," said the inferior intelligence taking facts as they came. "Our Gerârd has come down this rope. He has got clear. Up I go, and see."

"No, Giles, no!" said the superior intelligence blinded by prejudice. "See you not this is glamour. This rope is a line the evil one casts out to wile you to destruction. He knows the weaknesses of all our hearts; he has seen how fond you are of going up things. Where should our Gerard procure a rope? how fasten it in the very sky like that? It is not in nature. Holy saints protect us this night, for hell is abroad."

"Stuff!" said the dwarf: "the way to hell is down, and this rope leads up. I never had the luck to go up such a long rope. It may be years ere I fall in with such a long rope all ready fastened for me. As well be knocked on the head at once as never know enjoyment."

And he sprung on to the rope with a cry of delight, as a cat jumps with a mew on a table where fish is. All the gymnast was on fire; and the only concession Kate could gain from him was permission to fasten the lantern on his neck first.

"A light scares the ill spirits," said she.

And so, with his huge arms, and legs like feathers, Giles went up the rope faster than his brother came down it. The light at the nape of his neck made a glow-worm of him. His sister watched his progress with trembling anxiety. Suddenly a female figure started out of the solid masonry, and came flying at her with more than mortal velocity.

Kate uttered a feeble cry. It was all she could, for her tongue clove to her palate with terror. Then she dropped her crutches, and sank upon her knees, hiding her face and moaning :

"Take my body, but spare my soul!" etc.

Margaret (panting). "Why it is a woman!"

Kate (quivering). "Why it is a woman!"

Margaret. "How you frightened me."

Kate. "I am frightened enough myself. Oh! oh! oh!"

"This is strange. But the fiery-headed thing! Yet it was with you, and you are harmless. But why are you here at this time of night?"

"Nay, why are you?"

"Perhaps we are on the same errand? Ah! you are his *good* sister, Kate."

"And you are Margaret Brandt."

"Yes."

"All the better. You love him: you are here. Then Giles was right. He has escaped."

Gerard came forward, and put the question at rest. But all farther explanation was cut short by a horrible unearthly cry, like a sepulchre exulting aloud :

"PARCHMENT! PARCHMENT! PARCHMENT!"

At each repetition it rose in intensity. They looked up, and there was the dwarf with his hands full of parchments, and his face lighted with fiendish joy, and lurid with diabolical fire. The light being at his neck, a more infernal "transparency" never startled mortal eye. With

the word the awful imp hurled the parchment down at the astonished heads below. Down came the records, like wounded wild ducks, some collapsed, others fluttering, and others spread out and wheeling slowly down in airy circles. They had hardly settled, when again the sepulchral roar was heard: "Parchment! Parchment!" and down pattered and sailed another flock of documents—another followed: they whitened the grass. Finally, the fire-headed imp, with his light body and horny hands, slid down the rope like a falling star, and (business before sentiment) proposed to Gerard an immediate settlement for the merchandise he had just delivered.

"Hush!" said Gerard; "you speak too loud. Gather them up and follow us to a safer place than this."

"Will you not come home with me, Gerard?"

"I have no home."

"You shall not say so, Gerard. Who is more welcome than you will be, after this cruel wrong, to your father's house?"

"Father? I have no father," said Gerard, sternly.

"He that was my father is turned my jailer. I have escaped from his hands; I will never come within their reach again."

"An enemy did this, and not our father," said Kate.

And she told him what she had overheard Cornelis and Sybrandt say. But the injury was too recent to be soothed. Gerard showed a bitterness of indignation he had hitherto seemed incapable of.

"Cornelis and Sybrandt are two ill curs that have shown me their teeth and their heart a long while; but they could do no more. My father it is that gave the Burgomaster authority, or he durst not have laid a finger on me, that am a free burgher of this town. So be it, then. I was his son—I am his prisoner. He has played his part—I shall play mine. Farewell the town where I was born and lived honestly, and was put in prison. While there is another town left in creation, I'll never trouble you again, Tergou."

"Oh, Gerard! Gerard!"

Margaret whispered her: "Do not gainsay him now. Give his choler time to cool!"

Kate turned quickly toward her. "Let me look at your face!" The inspection was favorable, it seemed, for she whispered: "It is a comely face, and no mischief-maker's."

"Fear me not," said Margaret, in the same tone. "I could not be happy without your love as well as Gerard's."

"These are comfortable words," sobbed Kate. Then, looking up, she said, "I little thought to like you so well. My heart is willing, but my infirmity will not let me embrace you."

At this point Margaret turned gently round to Gerard's sister, and kissed her lovingly.

"Often he has spoken of you to me, Kate, and often I longed for this."

"You, too, Gerard," said Kate, "kiss me ere you go, for my heart lies heavy at parting with you this night."

Gerard kissed her, and she went on her crutches home. The last thing they heard of her was a little patient sigh. Then the tears came and stood thick in Margaret's eyes; but Gerard was a man, and noticed it not.

As they turned to go to Sevenbergen the dwarf nudged Gerard with his bundle of parchments, and sought remuneration.

Margaret dissuaded Gerard. "Why take what is not ours?"

"Oh! spoil an enemy how you can."

"But may they not make this a handle for fresh violence?"

"How can they? Think you I shall stay in Tergou after this? The Burgomaster robbed me of my liberty; I would take his life for it if I could."

"Oh fie, Gerard!"

"What? Is life worth more than liberty? Well, I

can't take his life, so I take the first thing that comes to hand."

He gave Giles a few small coins, with which the urchin was gladdened, and shuffled after his sister. Margaret and Gerard were speedily joined by Martin, and away to Sevenbergen.

CHAPTER XVI.

GHYSBRECHT VAN SWIETEN kept the key of Gerard's prison in his pouch. He waited till ten of the clock ere he visited him; for he said to himself, "A little hunger sometimes does well; it breaks them." At ten he crept up the stairs with a loaf and pitcher, followed by his trusty servant well armed. Ghysbrecht listened at the door. There was no sound inside. A grim smile stole over his features. "By this time he will be as down-hearted as Albert Koestein was," thought he. He opened the door.

No Gerard.

Ghysbrecht stood stupefied.

Although his face was not visible, his body seemed to lose all motion in so peculiar a way, and then after a little he fell a trembling so, that the servant behind him saw there was something amiss, and crept close to him and peeped over his shoulder. At sight of the empty cell and the rope, and iron bar, he uttered a loud exclamation of wonder: but his surprise doubled when his master, disregarding all else, suddenly flung himself on his knees before the empty chest, and felt wildly all over it with quivering hands, as if unwilling to trust his eyes in a matter so important.

The servant gazed at him in utter bewilderment. "Why, master, what is the matter?"

Ghysbrecht's pale lips worked as if he was going to answer; but they uttered no sound: his hands fell by his side, and he stared into the chest.

"Why, master, what avails glaring into that empty box? He is not there. See here! Note the cunning of the young rogue; he hath taken out the bar, and —"

"GONE! GONE! GONE!"

"Gone? What is gone? Holy saints! he is planet struck."

"STOP THIEF!" shrieked Ghysbrecht, and suddenly turned on his servant and collared him, and shook him with rage. "D'ye stand there, knave, and see your master robbed? Run! fly! A hundred crowns to him that finds it me again. No, no! 'tis in vain. Oh, fool! fool! to leave that in the same room with him. But none ever found the secret spring before. None ever would but he. It was to be. It is to be. Lost! lost!" And his years and infirmity now gained the better of his short-lived phrensy, and he sank on the chest muttering "lost! lost!"

"What is lost, master?" said the servant kindly.

"House and lands and good name:" groaned Ghysbrecht, and wrung his hands feebly.

"What?" cried the servant.

This emphatic word and the tone of eager curiosity struck on Ghysbrecht's ear, and revived his natural cunning.

"I have lost the town records," stammered he, and he looked askant at the man like a fox caught near a hen-roost.

"Oh, is that all?"

"Is't not enough? What will the burghers say to me? What will the burgh do?" Then he suddenly burst out again, "A hundred crowns to him who shall recover them; all, mind, all that were in this box. If one be missing, I give nothing."

"'Tis a bargain, master: the hundred crowns are in my pouch. See you not that where Gerard Gerardssoen is, there are the pieces of sheepskin you rate so high?"

"That is true; that is true; good Dierich: good faithful Dierich! All, mind, all, that were in the chest."

"Master, I will take the constables to Gerard's house and seize him for the theft."

"The theft? ay! good! very good! It is theft. I forgot that. So as he is a thief now, we will put him in the dungeons below: where the toads are and the rats. Dierich, that man must never see daylight again. 'Tis his own fault. He must be prying. Quick, quick! ere he has time to talk, you know, time to talk."

In less than half an hour Dierich Brower and four constables entered the hosier's house and demanded young Gerard of the panic-stricken Catherine.

"Alas! what has he done now?" cried she: "that boy will break my heart."

"Nay, dame, but a trick of youth," said Dierich. "He hath but made off with certain skins of parchment, in a frolic doubtless; but the Burgomaster is answerable to the burgh for their safe keeping, so he is in care about them: as for the youth, he will doubtless be quit for a reprimand."

This smooth speech completely imposed on Catherine; but her daughter was more suspicious, and that suspicion was strengthened by the disproportionate anger and disappointment Dierich showed the moment he learned Gerard was not at home—had not been at home that night.

"Come away then," said he roughly. "We are wasting time." He added, vehemently, "I'll find him if he is above ground."

Affection sharpens the wits, and often it has made an innocent person more than a match for the wily. As Dierich was going out, Kate made him a signal she would speak with him privately. He bade his men go on, and waited outside the door. She joined him.

"Hush!" said she, "my mother knows not. Gerard has left Tergou."

"How!"

"I saw him last night."

"Ay? Where?" cried Dierich, eagerly.

"At the foot of the haunted tower."

"How did he get the rope?"

"I know not; but this I know; my brother Gerard bade me there farewell, and he is many leagues from Tergou ere this. The town, you know, was always unworthy of him, and when it imprisoned him he vowed never to set foot in it again. Let the Burgomaster be content, then. He has imprisoned him, and he has driven him from his birth-place and from his native land. What need now to rob him and us of our good name?"

This might at another moment have struck Dierich as good sense; but he was too mortified at this escape of Gerard and the loss of a hundred crowns.

"What need had he to steal?" retorted he, bitterly.

"Gerard stole not the trash: he but *took* it to spite the Burgomaster, who stole his liberty; but he shall answer to the Duke for it, he shall. Look in the nearest brook or sty, and maybe you shall find these skins of parchment you keep such a coil about."

"Think ye so, mistress? think ye so?" And Dierich's eyes flashed. "Mayhap you know 'tis so."

"This I know, that Gerard is too good to steal, and too wise to load himself with rubbish, going a journey."

"Give you good-day, then," said Dierich, sharply. "The sheepskin you scorn, I value it more than the skin of any he in Tergou."

And he went off hastily on a false scent.

Kate returned into the house and drew Giles aside.

"Giles, my heart misgives me; breathe not to a soul what I say to you. I have told Dirk Brower that Gerard is out of Holland, but much I doubt he is not a league from Tergou."

"Why, where is he, then?"

"Where should he be, but with her he loves? But

if so he must not loiter. These be deep and dark and wicked men that seek him. Giles, I see that in Dirk Brower's eye makes me tremble. Oh! why can not I fly to Sevenbergen, and bid him away? Why am I not lusty and active like other girls? God forgive me for fretting at His will; but I never felt till now what it is to be lame and weak and useless. But you are strong, dear Giles," added she coaxingly—"you are very strong."

"Yes, I am strong!" thundered Perpusillus; then, catching sight of her meaning, "but I hate to go on foot," he added, sulkily.

"Alas! alas! who will help me if you will not? Dear Giles, do you not love Gerard?"

"Yes, I like him best of the lot. I'll go to Sevenbergen on Peter Buysken his mule. Ask you him, for he won't lend her me."

Kate remonstrated. The whole town would follow him. It would be known whither he was gone, and Gerard be in worse danger than before.

Giles parried this by promising to ride out of the town the opposite way, and not turn the mule's head toward Sevenbergen till he had got rid of the curious.

Kate then assented, and borrowed the mule. She charged Giles with a short but meaning message, and made him repeat it after her, over and over, till he could say it word for word.

Giles started on the mule, and little Kate retired, and did the last thing now in her power for her beloved brother: prayed on her knees long and earnestly for his safety.

CHAPTER XVII.

GERARD and Margaret went gayly to Sevenbergen in the first flush of recovered liberty, and successful adventure. But these soon yielded to sadder thoughts. Nei-

ther of them attached any importance to the abstraction of the sheepskins: but Gerard was an escaped prisoner, and liable to be retaken and perhaps punished; and therefore he and Margaret would have to part for a time. Moreover he had conceived a hatred to his native place. Margaret wished him to leave the country for a while, but at the thought of his going to Italy her heart fainted. Gerard, on the contrary, was reconciled to leaving Margaret only by his desire to visit Italy, and his strong conviction that there he should earn money and reputation, and remove every obstacle to their marriage. He had already told her all that the demoiselle Van Eyck had said to him. He repeated it, and reminded Margaret that the gold pieces were only given him to go to Italy with. The journey to Italy was clearly for Gerard's interest. He was a craftsman and an artist, lost in this boorish place. In Italy they would know how to value him. On this ground, above all, the unselfish girl gave her consent; but many tender tears came with it, and at that Gerard, young and loving as herself, cried bitterly with her, and often they asked one another what they had done, that so many different persons should be their enemies, and combine, as it seemed, to part them.

They sat hand in hand till midnight, now deploring their hard fate, now drawing bright and hopeful pictures of the future, in the midst of which Margaret's tears would suddenly flow, and then poor Gerard's eloquence would die away in a sigh.

The morning found them resigned to part, but neither had the courage to say when; and much I doubt whether the hour of parting ever would have struck.

But about three in the afternoon, Giles, who had made a circuit of many miles to avoid suspicion, rode up to the door. They both ran out to him, eager with curiosity. He soon turned that light feeling to dismay.

"Brother Gerard," cried he, in his tremendous tones, "Kate bids you run for your life. They charge you with

theft; you have given them a handle. Think not to explain. Hope not for justice in Tergou! The parchments you took they are but a blind. She hath seen your death in the men's eyes: a price is on your head. Fly! For Margaret's sake and all who love you, loiter not life away, but fly!"

It was a thunder-clap, and left two pale faces looking at one another, awestruck.

Then Giles, who had hitherto but uttered by rote what Catherine bade him, put in a word of his own.

"All the constables were at our house after you, and so was Dirk Brower. Kate is wise, Gerard. Best give ear to her rede, and fly."

"Oh, yes! Gerard," cried Margaret, wildly. "Fly on the instant. Ah! those parchments; my mind misgave me: why did I let you take them?"

"Margaret, they are but a blind: Giles says so; no matter, the old caitiff shall never see them again; I will not go till I have hidden his treasure where he shall never find it." Gerard then, after thanking Giles warmly, bade him farewell, and told him to go back, and tell Kate he was gone. "For I shall be gone ere you reach home," said he. He shouted for Martin; and told him what had happened, and begged him to go a little way toward Tergou, and watch the road.

"Ay!" said Martin, "and if I see Dirk Brower, or any of his men, I will shoot an arrow into the oak-tree that is in our garden; and on that you must run into the forest hard by, and meet me at the weird hunter's spring. Then I will guide you through the wood."

Surprise thus provided against, Gerard breathed again. He went with Margaret, and while she watched the oak-tree tremblingly, fearing every moment to see an arrow strike among the branches, Gerard dug a deep hole to bury the parchments in.

He threw them in, one by one. They were nearly all charters and records of the burgh; but one appeared to

be a private deed between Floris Brandt, father of Peter, and Ghysbrecht.

"Why this is as much yours as his," said Gerard. "I will read this."

"Oh, not now, Gerard, not now," cried Margaret. "Every moment you lose fills me with fear; and see, large drops of rain are beginning to fall, and the clouds lower."

Gerard yielded to this remonstrance; but he put the deed into his bosom, and threw the earth in over the others, and stamped it down. While thus employed there came a flash of lightning followed by a peal of distant thunder, and the rain came down heavily, Margaret and Gerard ran into the house, whither they were speedily followed by Martin.

"The road is clear," said he, "and a heavy storm coming on."

His words proved true. The thunder came nearer and nearer till it crashed overhead: the flashes followed one another close, like the strokes of a whip, and the rain fell in torrents. Margaret hid her face not to see the lightning. On this, Gerard put up the rough shutter, and lighted a candle. The lovers consulted together, and Gerard blessed the storm that gave him a few hours more with Margaret. The sun set unperceived, and still the thunder pealed, and the lightning flashed, and the rain poured. Supper was set; but Gerard and Margaret could not eat: the thought that this was the last time they should sup together, choked them. The storm lulled a little. Peter retired to rest. But Gerard was to go at peep of day, and neither he nor Margaret could afford to lose an hour in sleep. Martin sat up a while, too; for he was fitting a new string to his bow, a matter in which he was very nice.

The lovers murmured their sorrows and their love beside him.

Suddenly the old man held up his hand to them to be silent.

They were quiet and listened, and heard nothing. But the next moment a footstep crackled faintly upon the autumn leaves that lay strewn in the garden at the back door of the house. To those who had nothing to fear such a step would have said nothing; but to those who had enemies it was terrible. For it was a foot trying to be noiseless.

Martin fitted an arrow to his string, and hastily blew out the candle. At this moment, to their horror, they heard more than one footstep approach the other door of the cottage, not quite so noiselessly as the other, but very stealthily—and then a dead pause. Their blood almost froze in their veins.

"Oh, Kate! oh, Kate! She said, fly on the instant!" And Margaret moaned and wrung her hands in anguish and terror and wild remorse.

"Hush, girl!" said Martin, in a stern whisper; and even at that moment a heavy knock fell on the door.

As if this had been a concerted signal, the back door was struck as rudely the next instant. They were hemmed in. But at these alarming sounds Margaret seemed to recover some share of self-possession. She whispered, "Say he was here, but is gone." And with this she seized Gerard and almost dragged him up the rude steps that led to her father's sleeping-room. Her own lay next beyond it.

The blows on the door were repeated.

"Who knocks at this hour?"

"Open, and you will see!"

"I open not to thieves—honest men are all abed now."

"Open to the law, Martin Wittenhaagen, or you shall rue it."

"Why that is Dirk Brower's voice, I trow. What make you so far from Tergou?"

"Open, and you will know."

Martin drew the bolt, and in rushed Dierich and four more. They let in their companion who was at the back door.

"Now, Martin, where is Gerard Gerardssoen?"

"Gerard Gerardssoen? Why he was here but now."

"Was here?" Dierich's countenance fell. "And where is he now?"

"They say he is gone to Italy. Why? What is to do?"

"No matter. When did he go? Tell me not that he went in such a storm as this!"

"Here is a coil about Gerard Gerardssoen," said Martin contemptuously. Then he lighted the candle, and, seating himself coolly by the fire, proceeded to whip some fine silk round his bow-string at the place where the nick of the arrow frets it. "I'll tell you," said he, carelessly. "Do you know his brother Giles—a little misbegotten imp, all head and arms? Well, he came tearing over here on a mule, and bawled out something. I was too far off to hear the creature's words, but I heard its noise. Any way, he started Gerard. For as soon as he was gone, there was such crying and kissing, and then Gerard went away. They do tell me he is gone to Italy—mayhap you know where that is, for I don't."

Dierich's countenance fell lower and lower at this account. There was no flaw in it. A cunninger man than Martin would, perhaps, have told a lie too many, and raised suspicion. But Martin did his task well. He only told the one falsehood he was bid to tell, and of his own head invented nothing.

"Mates," said Dierich, "I doubt he speaks sooth. I told the Burgomaster how 'twould be. He met the dwarf galloping Peter Buysken's mule from Sevenbergen. 'They have sent that imp to Gerard,' says he, 'so, then, Gerard is at Sevenbergen.' 'Ah, master!' says I, 'tis too late now. We should have thought of Sevenbergen before, instead of wasting our time hunting all the odd corners of Tergou for those cursed parchments that we shall never find till we find the man that took 'em. If he was at Sevenbergen,' quoth I, 'and they

have sent the dwarf to him, it must have been to warn him we are after him. He is leagues away by now,' quoth I. 'Confound that chalk-faced girl! she has outwitted us bearded men:' and so I told the Burgomaster, but he would not hear reason. A wet jerkin apiece, that is all we shall get, mates, by this job."

Martin grinned coolly in Dierich's face.

"However," added the latter, "just to content the Burgomaster, we will search the house."

Martin turned grave directly.

This change of countenance did not escape Dierich. He reflected a moment.

"Watch outside two of you, one on each side of the house, that no one jump from the upper windows. The rest come with me."

And he took the candle and mounted the stairs, followed by three of his comrades.

Martin was left alone.

The stout soldier hung his head. All had gone so well at first: and now this fatal turn! Suddenly it occurred to him that all was not yet lost. Gerard must be either in Peter's room or Margaret's; they were not so very high from the ground. Gerard would leap out. Dierich had left a man below; but what then? For half a minute Gerard and he would be two to one, and in that brief space what might not be done?

Martin then held the back door ajar and watched. The light was in Peter's room. "Curse the fool!" said he, "is he going to let them take him like a girl?"

The light passed now into Margaret's bedroom. Still no window was opened. Had Gerard intended to escape that way he would not have waited till the men were in the room. Martin saw that at once, and left the door, and came to the foot-stair and listened. He began to think Gerard must have escaped by the window while all the men were in the house. The longer the silence continued the stronger grew this conviction. But it was suddenly and rudely dissipated.

Piercing shrieks issued from the inner bedroom—Margaret's.

"They have taken him," groaned Martin; "they have got him."

It flashed through Martin's mind in one moment that if they took Gerard away his life was not worth a button; and that, if evil befell him, Margaret's heart would break. He cast his eyes wildly round, like some savage beast seeking an escape, and in a twinkling he formed a resolution terribly characteristic of those iron times and of a soldier driven to bay.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HE stepped to each door in turn, and imitating Dirk Brower's voice, said sharply, "Watch the window!" He then quietly closed and bolted both doors. He then took up his bow and six arrows; one he fitted to his string, the others he put into his quiver. His knife he placed upon a chair behind him, the hilt toward him; and there he waited at the foot of the stair with the calm determination to slay those four men or be slain by them. Two, he knew, he could dispose of by his arrows, ere they could get near him, and Gerard and he must take their chance, hand-to-hand, with the remaining pair. Besides, he had seen men panic-stricken by a sudden attack of this sort. Should Brower and his men hesitate but an instant, he should shoot three instead of two, and then the odds would be on the right side.

He had not long to wait. The heavy steps sounded in Margaret's room, and came nearer and nearer.

The light also approached, and voices.

Martin's heart, stout as it was, beat hard, to hear men coming thus to their death, and, perhaps, to his; more likely so than not; for four is long odds in a battle-field

of ten feet square, and Gerard might be bound, perhaps, and powerless to help. But this man, whom we have seen shake in his shoes at a Giles-o'-lantern, never wavered in this awful moment of real danger, but stood there, his body all braced for combat and his eye glowing, equally ready to take life and lose it. Desperate game! to win which was exile instant and for life, and to lose it was to die that moment upon that floor he stood on.

Dierich Brower and his men found Peter in his first sleep. They opened his cupboards; they ran their knives into an alligator he had nailed to his wall; they looked under his bed: it was a large room, and apparently full of hiding places, but they found no Gerard.

Then they went on to Margaret's room, and the very sight of it was discouraging—it was small and bare, and not a cupboard in it; there was, however, a large fireplace and chimney. Dierich's eye fell on these directly. Here they found the beauty of Sevenbergen sleeping on an old chest, not a foot high, and no attempt made to cover it; but the sheets were snowy white, and so was Margaret's own linen. And there she lay, looking like a lily fallen into a rut.

Presently she awoke, and sat up in the bed, like one amazed; then, seeing the men, began to scream violently, and pray for mercy.

She made Dierich Brower ashamed of his errand.

"Here is a to-do," said he, a little confused. "We are not going to hurt you, my pretty maid. Lie you still, and shut your eyes, and think of your wedding-night, while I look up this chimney to see if Master Gerard is there."

"Gerard! in my room?"

"Why not? They say that you and he—"

"Cruel; you know they have driven him away from me—driven him from his native place. This is a blind. You are thieves; you are wicked men; you are not men

of Sevenbergen, or you would know Margaret Brandt better than to look for her lover in this room of all others in the world. Oh, brave! Four great hulking men to come, armed to the teeth, to insult one poor, honest girl! The women that live in your own houses must be naught, or you would respect them too much to insult a girl of good character."

"There, come away, before we hear worse," said Dietrich, hastily. "He is not in the chimney. Plaster will mend what a cudgel breaks; but a woman's tongue is a double-edged dagger, and a girl is a woman with her mother's milk still in her." And he beat a hasty retreat. "I told the Burgomaster how 'twould be."

CHAPTER XIX.

WHERE is the woman that can not act a part? Where is she who will not do it, and do it well, to save the man she loves. Nature on these great occasions comes to the aid of the simplest of the sex, and teaches her to throw dust in Solomon's eyes. The men had no sooner retired than Margaret stepped out of bed and opened the long chest on which she had been lying down in her skirt and petticoat and stockings, and night-dress over all; and put the lid, bed-clothes and all, against the wall; then glided to the door and listened. The footsteps died away through her father's room, and down the stairs.

Now, in that chest there was a peculiarity that it was almost impossible for a stranger to detect. A part of the boarding of the room had been broken, and Gerard being applied to to make it look neater, and being short of materials, had ingeniously sawed away a space sufficient just to admit Margaret's *soi-disant* bed, and with the materials thus acquired he had repaired the whole room. As for the bed or chest it really rested on the rafters a foot below the boards. Consequently it was full two feet deep, though it looked scarce one.

All was quiet. Margaret kneeled and gave thanks to Heaven. Then she glided from the door, and leaned over the empty chest, and whispered tenderly, "Gerard!"

Gerard did not reply.

She then whispered, a little louder, "Gerard, all is safe, thank Heaven! You may rise; but, oh! be cautious!"

Gerard made no reply.

She laid her hand upon his shoulder—"Gerard!"

No reply.

"Oh! what is this?" she cried, and her hands ran wildly over his face and his bosom. She took him by the shoulders; she shook him; she lifted him; but he escaped from her trembling hands, and fell back, not like a man but like a body. A great dread fell on her. The lid had been down. She had lain upon it. The men had been some time in the room. With all the strength of phrensy, she tore him out of the chest. She bore him in her arms to the window. She dashed the window open. The sweet air came in. She laid him in it and in the moonlight. His face was the color of ashes, his body was all limp and motionless. She felt his heart. Horror! It was as still as the rest! Horror of horrors! she had stifled him with her own body!

CHAPTER XX.

THE mind can not all at once believe so great and sudden and strange a calamity. Gerard, who had got alive into the chest scarce five minutes ago, how could he be dead?

She called him by all the endearing names that heart could think, or tongue could frame. She kissed him and fondled him and coaxed him, and implored him to speak to her.

No answer to words of love, such as she had never uttered to him before, nor thought she could utter. Then

the poor creature, trembling all over, began to say over that white face little foolish things that were at once terrible and pitiable.

"Oh, Gerard! I am very sorry you are dead! I am very sorry I have killed you! Forgive me for not letting the men take you, it would have been better than this! Oh, Gerard! I am very, very sorry for what I have done!" Then she began suddenly to rave. "No! no! such things can't be, or there is no God! It is monstrous! How can my Gerard be dead? How can I have killed my Gerard? I love him! Oh, God! you know how I love him! He does not. I never told him. If he knew my heart, he would speak to me, he would not be so deaf to his poor Margaret. It is all a trick to make me cry out and betray him; but, no, I love him too well for that. I'll choke first." And she seized her own throat, to check her wild desire to scream in her terror and anguish.

"If he would but say one word. Oh, Gerard! don't die without a word. Have mercy on me and scold me! but speak to me: if you are angry with me, scold me! curse me! I deserve it: the idiot that killed the man she loved better than herself. Ah! I am a murderess. The worst in all the world. Help, help! I have murdered him. Ah! ah! ah! ah! ah!"

She tore her hair, and uttered shriek after shriek so wild, so piercing, they fell like a knell upon the ears of Dierich Brower and his men. All started to their feet, and looked at one another.

CHAPTER XXI.

MARTIN WITTENHAAGEN, standing at the foot of the stairs with his arrow drawn nearly to the head, and his knife behind him, was struck with amazement, to see the men come back without Gerard: he lowered his bow,

and looked open-mouthed at them. They, for their part, were equally surprised at the attitude they had caught him in.

"Why, mates, was the old fellow making ready to shoot one of *us*?"

"Stuff!" said Martin, recovering his stolid composure, "I was but trying my new string. There, I'll unstring my bow, if you think that."

"Humph!" said Dierich, suspiciously, "there is something more in you than I understand: put a log on, and let us dry our hides a bit, ere we go."

A blazing fire was soon made, and the men gathered round it, and their clothes and long hair were soon smoking from the cheerful blaze. Then it was that the shrieks were heard in Margaret's room. They all started up, and one of them seized the candle, and ran up the steps that led to the bedrooms.

Martin rose hastily, too, and being confused by these sudden screams, and apprehending danger from the man's curiosity, tried to prevent him from going there.

At this Dierich threw his arms round him from behind, and called on the others to keep him. The man that had the candle got clear away, and all the rest fell on Martin, and after a long and fierce struggle, in the course of which they were more than once all rolling on the floor, with Martin in the middle, they succeeded in mastering the old Samson, and binding him hand and foot with a rope they had brought for Gerard.

"That is a good job," said Dierich, pointing; "our lives weren't safe while this old fellow's four bones were free. He makes me think Gerard is hereabouts, for all we can't find him. Halloo, mates! Jorian Ketel's a long time in that girl's bedroom."

The rude laugh caused by this remark had hardly subsided, when hasty footsteps were heard running along overhead.

"Oh! here he comes, at last. Well, Jorian, what is to do now?"

CHAPTER XXII.

JORIAN KETEL went straight to Margaret's room, and there he found the man he had been in search of, pale and motionless, his head in Margaret's lap, and she kneeling over him, mute now, and stricken to stone. Her eyes were dilated, yet glazed, and she neither saw the light nor heard the man, nor cared for any thing on earth but the white face in her lap.

Jorian stood awe-struck, the candle shaking in his hand.

Why, where was he, then, all the time?

Margaret heeded him not. Jorian went to the empty chest and inspected it. He began to comprehend. The girl's dumb and frozen despair moved him.

"This is a sorry sight," said he: "it is a black night's work; all for a few skins! Better have gone with us than so. She is past answering me, poor wench! Stop—let us try."

He took down a little round mirror, no bigger than his hand, and put it to Gerard's mouth and nostrils, and held it there. When he withdrew it, it was dull. Jorian Ketel gave a joyful cry:

"THERE IS LIFE IN HIM, GIRL!"

At that word, it was as if a statue had started into life and passion. Margaret rose, and flung her arms round Jorian's neck.

"Oh, bless the tongue that tells me so!" and she kissed the great rough fellow again and again, eagerly, almost fiercely.

"There, there! let us lay him warm," said Jorian; and in a moment he raised Gerard, and laid him on the bed-clothes. Then he took out a flask he carried, and filled his hand twice with Schiedamze, and flung it sharp-

ly each time in Gerard's face. The pungent liquor cooperated with his recovery—he gave a faint sigh. Oh, never was sound so joyful to human ear! She flew toward him, but then stopped, quivering for fear she should hurt him. She had lost all confidence in herself.

“That is right—let him alone,” said Jorian; “don't go cuddling him as you did me, or you'll drive his breath back again. Let him alone: he is sure to come to. 'Tisn't like as if he was an old man.”

Gerard sighed deeply, and a faint streak of color stole to his lips. Jorian made for the door. He had hardly reached it, when he found his legs seized from behind.

It was Margaret! She curled round his knees like a serpent, and kissed his hand, and fawned on him. “You won't tell? You have saved his life; you have not the heart to thrust him back into his grave, to undo your own good work?”

“No, no! It is not the first time I've done you two a good turn; 'twas I told you in the church whither we had to take him. Besides, what is Dirk Brower to me? I'll see him hanged ere I'll tell him. But I wish you'd tell *me* where the parchments are? There are a hundred crowns offered for them. That would be a good windfall for my Joan and the children, you know.”

“Ah! they shall have those hundred crowns.”

“What! are the things in the house?” asked Jorian, eagerly.

“No; but I know where they are; and by God and St. Barsos, I swear you shall have them to-morrow. Come to me for them when you will, but come alone.”

“I were mad, else. What! share the hundred crowns with Dirk Brower? And now may my bones rot in my skin if I let a soul know the poor boy is here!”

He then ran off, lest by staying longer he should excite suspicion, and have them all after him. And Margaret knelt, quivering from head to foot, and prayed beside Gerard, and for Gerard.

"What is to do? Why we have scared the girl out of her wits. She was in a kind of fit."

"We had better all go and doctor her, then."

"Oh yes! and frighten her into the church-yard. Her father is a doctor, and I have roused him, and sent him to bring her round. Let us see the fire, will ye?"

His off-hand way disarmed all suspicion. And soon after the party agreed that the kitchen of the Three Kings was much warmer than Peter's house, and they departed, having first untied Martin.

"Take note, mate, that I was right, and the Burgo-master wrong," said Dierich Brower, at the door: "I said we should be too late to catch him, and we were too late."

Thus Gerard, in one terrible night, grazed the prison and the grave!

And how did he get clear at last? Not by his cunningly-contrived hiding-place, nor by Margaret's ready wit; but by a good impulse in one of his captors—by the bit of humanity left in a somewhat reckless fellow's heart, aided by his desire of gain. So mixed and seemingly incongruous are human motives, so short-sighted our shrewdest counsels.

They whose moderate natures, or gentle fates, keep them in life's passage from the fierce extremes of joy and anguish our nature is capable of, are perhaps the best, and certainly the happiest, of mankind. But to such readers I should try in vain to convey what bliss unspeakable settled now upon those persecuted lovers. Even to those who have joyed greatly, and greatly suffered, my feeble art can present but a pale reminiscence, and a faint reflection of Margaret's and Gerard's ecstasy.

To sit and see a beloved face come back from the grave to the world, to health and beauty by swift gradations; to see the roses return to the loved cheek, love's

glance to the loved eye, and his words to the loved mouth: this was Margaret's—a joy to balance years of sorrow. It was Gerard's to awake from a trance and find his head pillowed on Margaret's arm; to hear the woman he adored murmur new words of eloquent love, and shower tears and tender kisses and caresses on him. He never knew, till this sweet moment, how ardently, how tenderly she loved him. He thanked his enemies. They wreathed their arms sweetly round each other, and trouble and danger seemed a world, an age, behind them. They called each other husband and wife. Had they not stood before the altar together? Was not the blessing of Holy Church upon their union? Her curse on all who would part them?

But as no woman's nerves can bear with impunity so terrible a strain, presently Margaret turned faint, and sank on Gerard's shoulder, smiling feebly, but quite, quite unstrung. Thus Gerard was anxious, and would seek assistance. But she held him with a gentle grasp, and implored him not to leave her for a moment. "While I can lay my hand on you, I feel you are safe, not else. Foolish Gerard! nothing ails me. I am weak, dearest, but happy, oh! so happy!"

Then it was Gerard's turn to support that dear head, with its great waves of hair flowing loose over him, and nurse her, and soothe her, quivering on his bosom, with soft encouraging words and murmurs of love, and gentle caresses. Sweetest of all her charms is a woman's weakness to a manly heart.

Poor things! they were happy. To-morrow they must part. But that was nothing to them now. They had seen Death, and all other troubles seemed light as air. While there is life there is hope: while there is hope there is joy. Separation for a year or two, what was it to them, who were so young, and had caught a glimpse of the grave? The future was bright: the present was Heaven: so passed the blissful hours.

Alas! their innocence ran other risks besides the prison and the grave: they were in most danger from their own hearts and their inexperience, now that visible danger there was none.

Ghysbrecht Van Swieten could not sleep all night for anxiety. He was afraid of thunder and lightning, or he would have made one of the party that searched Peter's house. As soon as the storm ceased altogether, he crept down stairs, saddled his mule, and rode to the Three Kings at Sevenbergen. There he found his men sleeping, some on the chairs, some on the tables, some on the floor. He roused them furiously, and heard the story of their unsuccessful search, interlarded with praises of their zeal.

"Fool! to let you go without me," cried the Burgo-master. "My life on't he was there all the time. Looked ye under the girl's bed?"

"No: there was no room for a man there."

"How know ye that, if ye looked not?" snarled Ghysbrecht. "Ye should have looked under her bed, and in it, too; and sounded all the panels with your knives. Come, now, get up, and I shall show ye how to search."

Dierich Brower got up, and shook himself: "If you find him, call me a horse and no man."

In a few minutes Peter's house was again surrounded.

The fiery old man left his mule in the hands of Jorian Ketel, and, with Dierich Brower and the others, entered the house.

The house was empty!

Not a creature to be seen, not even Peter. They went up stairs, and then suddenly one of the men gave a shout, and pointed through Peter's window, which was open. The others looked, and there, at some little distance, walking quietly across the fields with Margaret and Martin, was the man they sought. Ghysbrecht, with an exulting yell, descended the stairs, and flung himself on his mule; and he and his men set off in hot pursuit.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GERARD, warned by recent peril, rose before daybreak, and waked Martin. The old soldier was astonished. He thought Gerard had escaped by the window last night. Being consulted as to the best way for him to leave the country and elude pursuit, he said there was but one road safe. "I must guide you through the great forest to a bridle-road I know of. This will take you speedily to a hostelry, where they will lend you a swift horse: and then an hour's gallop will take you out of Holland. But let us start ere the folk here quit their beds."

Peter's house was but a furlong and a half from the forest. They started, Martin with his bow and three arrows, for it was Thursday: Gerard with nothing but a stout oak staff Peter gave him for the journey.

Margaret pinned up her kirtle and farthingale, for the road was wet. Peter went as far as his garden hedge with them, and then, with more emotion than he often bestowed on passing events, gave the young man his blessing.

The sun was peeping above the horizon as they crossed the stony field and made for the wood. They had crossed about half, when Margaret, who kept nervously looking back every now and then, uttered a cry, and following her instinct, began to run toward the wood, screaming with terror all the way.

Ghysbrecht and his men were in hot pursuit.

Resistance would have been madness. Martin and Gerard followed Margaret's example. The pursuers gained slightly on them; but Martin kept shouting, "Only gain the wood! only gain the wood!"

They had too good a start for the men on foot, and

their hearts bounded with hope at Martin's words, for the great trees seemed now to stretch their branches like friendly arms toward them, and their leaves like a screen.

But an unforeseen danger burst on them. The fiery old Burgomaster had flung himself on his mule, and, spurring him to a gallop, he headed not his own men only, but the fugitives. His object was to cut them off. The old man came galloping in a semicircle, and got on the edge of the wood, right in front of Gerard; the others might escape for aught he cared.

Margaret shrieked twice; but only once for Gerard.

Ghysbrecht, in his ardor, had forgotten that hunted animals turn on the hunter; and that two men can hate, and two can long to kill the thing they hate.

Instead of attempting to dodge him, as the Burgomaster thought he would, Gerard flew right at him with a savage, exulting cry, and struck at him with all his heart and soul and strength. The oak staff came down on his face with a frightful crash, and laid him under his mule's tail, beating the devil's tattoo with his heels, his face streaming, and his collar spattered with blood.

The next moment the three were in the wood. The yell of dismay and vengeance that burst from Ghysbrecht's men at that terrible blow which felled their leader, told the fugitives that it was a race for life or death.

"Why run?" cried Gerard, panting. "You have your bow; and I have this:" and he shook his bloody staff.

"Boy!" roared Martin; "the GALLOWS! Follow me!" and he fled into the wood. Soon they heard a cry like a pack of hounds opening on sight of the game. The men were in the wood, and saw them flitting among the trees. Margaret moaned and panted, as she ran; and Gerard clenched his teeth, and grasped his staff. The next minute they came to a stiff hazel coppice.

Martin dashed into it, and shouldered the young wood aside as if it were standing corn.

Ere they had gone fifty yards in it they came to four blind paths.

Martin took one. "Bend low," said he: and, half creeping, they glided along. Presently their path was again intersected with other little tortuous paths. They took one of them; it seemed to lead back, but soon it took a turn, and after a while brought them to a thick pine grove where the walking was good and hard: there were no paths here, and the young fir-trees were so thick you could not see three yards before your nose.

When they had gone some way in this, Martin sat down, and accustomed to lose all impression of danger with the danger itself, took a piece of bread and a slice of ham out of his wallet, and began quietly to eat his breakfast.

The young ones looked at him with dismay. He replied to their looks.

"All Sevenbergen could not find you now; you will lose your purse, Gerard, long before you get to Italy: is that the way to carry a purse?"

Gerard looked, and there was a large triangular purse, entangled by its chains to the buckle and strap of his wallet.

"This is none of mine," said he. "What is in it, I wonder?" and he tried to detach it: but in passing through the coppice it had become inextricably entangled in his strap and buckle. It seems loth to leave me," said Gerard, and he had to cut it loose with his knife. The purse, on examination, proved to be well provided with silver coins of all sizes, but its bloated appearance was greatly owing to a number of pieces of brown paper folded and doubled. A light burst on Gerard. "Why, it must be that old thief's? and see! stuffed with paper to deceive the world!"

The wonder was, how the Burgomaster's purse came on Gerard.

They hit at last upon the right solution. The purse must have been at Ghysbrecht's saddle-bow, and Gerard, rushing at his enemy, had unconsciously torn it away, thus felling his enemy and robbing him, with a single gesture.

Gerard was delighted at this feat, but Margaret was uneasy.

"Throw it away, Gerard, or let Martin take it back. Already they call you a thief. I can not bear it."

"Throw it away? give it him back? not a stiver. This is spoil, lawfully won in battle from an enemy. Is it not, Martin?"

"Why, of course. Send him back the brown paper as you will; but the purse or the coin—that were a sin."

"Oh, Gerard!" said Margaret, "you are going to a distant land. We need the good-will of Heaven. How can we hope for that, if we take what is not ours?"

But Gerard saw it in a different light.

"It is Heaven that gives it me by a miracle, and I shall cherish it accordingly," said this pious youth. "Thus the favored people spoiled the Egyptians, and were blessed."

"Take your own way," said Margaret, humbly, "you are wiser than I am. You are my husband," added she, in a low murmuring voice; "is it for me to gainsay you?"

These humble words from Margaret, who, till that day, had held the whip hand, rather surprised Martin for the moment. They recurred to him some time afterward, and then they surprised him less.

Gerard kissed her tenderly in return for her wife-like docility, and they pursued their journey hand-in-hand, Martin leading the way, into the depths of the huge forest. The farther they went the more absolutely secure from pursuit they felt. Indeed, the townspeople never ventured so far as this into the trackless part of the forest.

Impetuous natures repent quickly. Gerard was no

sooner out of all danger, than his conscience began to prick him.

"Martin, would I had not struck quite so hard."

"Whom? Oh! let that pass; he is cheap served."

"Martin, I saw his gray hairs as my stick fell on him. I doubt I shall not get them out of my sight this while."

Martin grunted. "Who spares a badger for his gray hairs? The grayer your enemy is, the older; and the older the craftier; and the craftier the better for a little killing."

"Killing? Killing, Martin? don't speak of killing!" And Gerard shook all over.

"I am very much mistaken if you have not," said Martin, cheerfully.

"Now Heaven forbid!"

"The old vagabond's skull cracked like a walnut. Aha!"

"God and all the saints forbid it!"

"He rolled off his mule like a stone shot out of a cart. Said I to myself, 'there is one wiped out.'" And the iron old soldier grinned ruthlessly.

Gerard fell on his knees, and began to pray for his enemy's life.

At this Martin lost patience. "Here's mummary. What, you that set up for learning, know you not that a wise man never strikes his enemy but to kill him? And what is all this coil about killing of old men? If it had been a young one now, with the joys of life waiting for him—to wit, wine, women, and pillage—but an old fellow at the edge of the grave, why *not* shove him in? Go he must, to-day or to-morrow; and what better place for gray-beards? Now, if ever I should be so mischancy as to last so long as Ghysbrecht did, and have to go on a mule's legs instead of Martin Wittenhaagen's, and a back like this (striking the wood of his bow), instead of this (striking the string), I'll thank and bless any young fellow, who will have the charity and the friendship to

knock me on the head, as you have done that old shop-keeper, malediction on his memory!"

"Oh, culpa mea! culpa mea!" cried Gerard, and smote upon his breast.

"Look there," said Martin to Margaret, scornfully, "*he is a priest at heart, still*; and, when he is not in ire, St. Paul! what a milk-sop!"

"Tush, Martin!" cried Margaret, reproachfully: then sinking on her knees, she wreathed her arms round Gerard, and comforted him with the double magic of a woman's sense and a woman's voice.

"Sweetheart," murmured she, "you forget: you went not a step out of the way to harm him, who hunted you to your death. You fled from him. He it was who spurred on you. Then did you strike, but in self-defense, and a single blow, and with that which was in your hand. Malice had drawn knife, or struck again and again. How often have men been smitten with staves not one but many blows, yet no lives lost. If, then, your enemy has fallen, it is through his own malice, not yours, and by the will of God."

"Bless you, Margaret, bless you, for thinking so!"

"Yes; but, beloved one, if you have had the *misfortune* to kill that wicked man, the more need is there that you fly with haste from Holland. Oh! let us on."

"Nay, Margaret," said Gerard, "I fear not man's vengeance, thanks to Martin here, and this thick wood: only Him I fear whose eye pierces the forest, and reads the heart of man. If I but struck in self-defense, 'tis well; but if in hate, he may bid the avenger of blood follow me to Italy; to Italy? ay, to earth's remotest bounds."

"Hush!" said Martin, peevishly. "I can't hear for your chat."

"What is it?"

"Do you hear nothing, Margaret? My ears are getting old."

Margaret listened, and presently she heard a tuneful sound, like a single stroke upon a deep ringing bell. She described it so to Martin.

"Nay, I heard it," said he.

"And so did I," said Gerard: "it was beautiful: Ah! there it is again. How sweetly it blends with the air. It is a long way off. It is before us; is it not?"

"No, no! the echoes of this wood confound the ear of a stranger. It comes from the pine grove."

"What, the one we passed?"

"The one we passed."

"Why, Martin, is this *any thing*? You look pale."

"Wonderful!" said Martin, with a sickly sneer. "He asks me is it *any thing*? Come, on, on! at any rate, let us reach a better place than this."

"A better place—for what?"

"To stand at bay, Gerard," said Martin, gravely; "and die like soldiers, killing three for one."

"What's that sound?"

"IT IS THE AVENGER OF BLOOD."

"Oh, Martin, save him! Oh, Heaven be merciful! What new, mysterious peril is this?"

"GIRL, IT'S A BLOOD-HOUND."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE courage, like the talent of common men, runs in a narrow groove. Take them but an inch out of that, and they are done. Martin's courage was perfect as far as it went. He had met and baffled many dangers in the course of his rude life; and these familiar dangers he could face with Spartan fortitude, almost with indifference: but he had never been hunted by a blood-hound; nor had he ever seen that brute's, unerring instinct baffled by human cunning. Here then a sense of the supernatural combined with novelty to unsteel his heart. After going a few steps he leaned on his bow, and energy

and hope oozed out of him. Gerard, to whom the danger appeared slight in proportion as it was distant, urged him to flight.

"What avails it?" said Martin sadly; "if we get clear of the wood we shall die cheap; here, hard-by, I know a place where we may die dear."

"Alas! good Martin," cried Gerard: "despair not so quickly: there must be some way to escape."

"Oh, Martin!" cried Margaret. "What if we were to part company? Gerard's life alone is forfeit! is there no way to draw the pursuit on us twain, and let him go safe?"

"Girl, you know not the blood-hound's nature. He is not on this man's track, or that; he is on the track of blood. My life on't, they have taken him to where Ghysbrecht fell, and from Ghysbrecht's blood to the man that shed it that cursed hound will lead them, though Gerard should run through an army, or swim the Meuse." And again he leaned upon his bow, and his head sank.

The hound's mellow voice rang through the wood.

A cry more tunable
Was never hallooed to, nor cheered with horn,
In Crete, in Sparta, or in Thessaly.

Strange that things beautiful should be terrible and deadly. The eye of the boa constrictor while fascinating its prey is lovely. No royal crown holds such a jewel; it is a ruby with the emerald's green light playing ever upon it. Yet the deer that sees it, loses all power of motion, and trembles, and awaits his death; and even so to compare hearing with sight, this sweet and mellow sound seemed to fascinate Martin Wittenhaagen. He stood uncertain, bewildered, and unnerved. Gerard was little better now. Martin's last words had daunted him. He had struck an old man and shed his blood, and by means of that very blood blood's four-footed avenger was on his track. Was not the finger of Heaven in this?

While the men were thus benumbed, the woman's brain was all activity. The man she loved was in danger.

"Lend me your knife," said she to Martin. He gave it her.

"But 'twill be little use in your hands," said he.

Then Margaret did a sly thing. She stepped behind Gerard, and furtively drew the knife across her arm, and made it bleed freely; then stooping, smeared her hose and shoes; and still as the blood trickled she smeared them; but so adroitly that neither Gerard nor Martin saw. Then she seized the soldier's arm.

"Come, be a man!" she said, haughtily, "and let this end. Take us to some thick place, where numbers will not avail our foes."

"I am going," said Martin sulkily. "Hurry avails not; we can't shun the hound, and the place is hard by;" then turning to the left, he led the way, as men go to execution.

He soon brought them to a thick hazel coppice, like the one that had favored their escape in the morning.

"There," said he, "this is but a furlong broad, but it will serve our turn."

"What are we to do?"

"Get through this, and wait on the other side; then as they come straggling through, shoot three, knock two on the head, and the rest will kill us."

"Is that all you can think of?" said Gerard.

"That is all."

"Then, Martin Wittenhaagen, I take the lead; for you have lost your head. Come, can you obey so young a man as I am?"

"Oh! yes, Martin," cried Margaret, "do not gainsay Gerard! He is wiser than his years."

Martin gave a sullen assent, and they entered the thick coppice.

When they had painfully traveled through half the

brush-wood, the blood-hound's deep bay came nearer and nearer, louder and louder.

Margaret trembled.

Martin went down on his stomach and listened.

"I hear a horse's feet."

"No," said Gerard. "I doubt it is a mule's. That cursed Ghysbrecht is still alive, none other would follow me up so bitterly."

"Never strike your enemy but to slay him," said Martin, gloomily.

"I'll hit harder this time, if Heaven gives me the chance," said Gerard.

At last they worked through the coppice, and there was an open wood. The trees were large, but far apart, and no escape possible that way.

And now with the hound's bay mingled a score of voices, whooping and hallooing.

"The whole village is out after us," said Martin.

"I care not," said Gerard. "Listen, Martin. The hound will gain on the men, and as soon as he comes out of the coppice, we will kill him."

"The hound? There are more than one!"

"I hear but one."

"Ay! but one speaks, the others run mute; but let the leading hound lose the scent, then another shall give tongue. There will be three dogs at least, or devils in dogs' hides. Then we must kill three, instead of one. The moment they are dead, into the coppice again, and go right back. That is a good thought, Gerard!" said Martin, lifting his head.

"Hush! the men are in the wood."

Gerard now gave his orders in a whisper.

"Stand you with your bow by the side of the coppice—there, in the ditch! I will go but a few yards to you oak-tree, and hide behind it; the dogs will follow me, and, as they come out, shoot as many as you can; the rest will I brain as they come round the tree!"

Martin's eye flashed. They took up their places.

The whooping and hallooing came closer and closer, and even the rustling of the young wood was heard, and every now and then the unerring blood-hound gave a single bay.

Oh! it was terrible! the branches rustling nearer and nearer, and the inevitable struggle for life and death coming on minute by minute, and that death-knell leading it. A trembling hand was laid on Gerard's shoulder. It made him start violently.

"Martin says, if we are forced to part company, make for that high ash-tree we came in by."

"Yes! yes! yes! but go back for Heaven's sake! don't come here!"

She ran back toward Martin; but, ere she could get to him, suddenly a huge dog burst out of the coppice, and stood erect a moment. He never noticed Margaret. But he lowered his nose an instant, and the next moment, with an awful yell, sprang straight at Gerard's tree, and rolled head-over-heels dead as a stone, literally spitted by an arrow from the bow that twanged beside the coppice in Martin's hand. That same moment out came another hound and smelt his dead comrade. Gerard rushed out at him; but, ere he could use his cudgel, a streak of white lightning seemed to strike the hound, and he groveled in the dust, wounded desperately, but not killed, and howling piteously.

Gerard had not time to dispatch him; the coppice rustled too near; it seemed alive with men. Pointing wildly to Martin to go back, Gerard ran a few yards to the right, then crept cautiously into the thick coppice just as three men burst out. These had headed their comrades considerably; the rest were following at various distances. Gerard crawled back almost on all-fours. Instinct taught Martin and Margaret to do the same upon their line of retreat. Thus, within the distance of a few yards, the pursuers and pursued were passing one another upon opposite tracks.

A loud cry announced the discovery of the dead and the wounded hound. Then followed a babble of voices, still swelling as fresh pursuers reached the spot. The hunters, as usual on a surprise, were wasting time, and the hunted ones were making the most of it.

"I hear no more hounds," whispered Martin to Margaret, and he was himself again.

It was Margaret's turn to tremble and despair. "Oh! why did we part with Gerard? They will kill my Gerard, and I not near him!"

"Nay, nay! the head to catch him is not on their shoulders. You bade him meet us at the ash-tree."

"And so I did! Bless you, Martin, for thinking of that—to the ash-tree!"

"Ay! but with less noise."

They were now nearly at the edge of the coppice, when suddenly they heard whooping and hallooing behind them. The men had satisfied themselves the fugitives were in the coppice, and were beating back.

"No matter," whispered Martin to his trembling companion. "We shall have time to win clear and slip out of sight by hard running. Ah!"

He stopped suddenly; for just as he was going to burst out of the brush-wood, his eye caught a figure keeping sentinel. It was Ghysbrecht Van Swieten seated on his mule, a bloody bandage was across his nose, the bridge of which was broken; but over this his eyes peered keenly, and it was plain by their expression he had heard the fugitives rustle, and was looking out for them. Martin muttered a terrible oath, and cautiously strung his bow, then with equal caution fitted his last arrow to the string. Margaret put her hands to her face, but said nothing. She saw this man must die or Gerard. After the first impulse she peered through her fingers, her heart panting audibly.

The bow was raised and the deadly arrow steadily

drawn to its head, when at that moment an active figure leaped on Ghysbrecht from behind so swiftly, it was like a hawk swooping on a pigeon. A shirt went over the Burgomaster, and, in a turn of the hand, his head was muffled in it, and he was whirled from his seat and fell heavily upon the ground, where he lay groaning with terror; and Gerard jumped down after him.

"Hist, Martin! Martin!"

Martin and Margaret came out, the former open-mouthed, crying, "Now fly! fly! while they are all in the thicket; we are saved!"

At this crisis, when safety seemed at hand, as fate would have it, Margaret, who had borne so bravely till now, began to succumb, partly from loss of blood.

"Oh, my beloved! fly!" she gasped. "Leave me, for I am faint!"

"No! no!" screamed Gerard. "Death together, or safety! Ah! the mule! mount her; you, and I'll—"

In a moment Martin was on the mule, and Gerard raised the fainting girl in his arms and placed her on the saddle, and relieved Martin of his bow.

"Help! treason! murder! murder!" shrieked Ghysbrecht, rising on his hams.

"Silence, cur!" roared Gerard, and trode him down again by the throat as men crush an adder. "Now have you got her firm? Then fly! for our lives!"

But even as the mule, urged suddenly by Martin's heel, scattered the flints with his hind hoofs ere he got into a canter, and even as Gerard withdrew his foot from Ghysbrecht's throat to run, Dierich Brower and his five men, who had come back for orders, and heard the Burgomaster's cries, burst roaring out of the coppice on them.

CHAPTER XXV.

SPEECH is the familiar vent of human thoughts; but there are emotions so simple and overpowering, that they rush out not in words, but in eloquent sounds. At such moments man seems to lose his characteristics, and to be merely one of the higher animals; for these when greatly agitated ejaculate, though they can not speak.

There was something terrible and truly animal both in the roar of triumph with which the pursuers burst out of the thicket on our fugitives, and in the sharp cry of terror with which these latter darted away. The pursuers' hands clutched the empty air, scarce two feet behind them, as they fled for life. Confused for a moment, like lions that miss their spring, Dierich and his men let Gerard and the mule put ten yards between them. Then they flew after with uplifted weapons. They were sure of catching them; for this was not the first time the parties had measured speed. In the open ground they had gained visibly on the trio this morning, and now, at last, it was a fair race again, to be settled by speed alone. A hundred yards were covered in no time. Yet still there remained these ten yards between the pursuers and the pursued.

This increase of speed since the morning puzzled Dierich Brower. But I think I understand it. When three run in company, the pace is that of the slowest of the three. From Peter's house to the edge of the forest Gerard ran Margaret's pace; but now he ran his own; for the mule was fleet, and could have left them all far behind. Moreover, youth and chaste living began to tell. Daylight grew imperceptibly between the hunted ones and the hunters. Then Dierich made a desperate effort, and gained two yards; but in a few seconds Ge-

rard had stolen them quickly back. The pursuers began to curse.

Martin heard, and his face lighted up. "Courage Gerard! courage, brave lad! they are straggling."

It was so. Dierich was now headed by one of his men, and another dropped into the rear altogether.

They came to a rising ground, not sharp, but long; and here youth, and grit, and honest living, told more than ever.

Ere he reached the top, Dierich's forty years weighed him down like forty bullets. "Our cake is dough," he gasped. "Take him dead, if you can't alive;" and he left off running, and followed at a foot's pace. Jorian Ketel tailed off next; and then another, and so, one by one, Gerard ran them all to a stand still, except one who kept on stanch as a blood-hound, though losing ground every minute. His name, if I am not mistaken, was Eric Wouverman. Followed by this one, they came to a rise in the wood, shorter, but much steeper than the last.

"Hand on mane!" cried Martin.

Gerard obeyed, and the mule helped him up the hill faster even than he was running before.

At the sight of this manœuvre, Dierich's man lost heart, and, being now full eighty yards behind Gerard, and rather more than that in advance of his nearest comrade, he pulled up short, and in obedience to Dierich's order, took down his cross-bow, leveled it deliberately, and just as the trio were sinking out of sight, over the crest of the hill, sent the bolt whizzing among them.

There was a cry of dismay; and, next moment, as if a thunderbolt had fallen on them, they were all lying on the ground, mule and all.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE effect was so sudden and magical, that the shooter himself was stupefied for a moment. Then he hailed his companions to join him in effecting the capture, and himself set off up the hill; when up rose the figure of Martin Wittenhaagen with a bent bow in his hand. Eric Wouverman no sooner saw him in this attitude, than he darted behind a tree, and made himself as small as possible. Martin's skill with that weapon was well known, and the slain dog was a keen reminder of it.

Wouverman peered round the bark cautiously; there was the arrow's point still aimed at him. He saw it shine. He dared not move from his shelter.

When he had been at peep-bo some minutes, his companions came up, and then, with a scornful laugh, Martin vanished, and presently was heard to ride off on the mule.

All the men ran up together. The high ground commanded a view of a narrow but almost interminable glade.

They saw Gerard and Margaret running along at a prodigious distance; they looked like gnats; and Martin galloping after them *ventre à terre*.

The hunters were outwitted as well as outrun. A few words will explain Martin's conduct. We arrive at causes by noting coincidences; yet, now and then, coincidences are deceitful. As we have all seen a hare tumble over a brier just as the gun went off, and so raise expectations, then dash them to earth by scudding away untouched, so the Burgomaster's mule put her foot in a rabbit-hole, at or about the time the cross-bow bolt whizzed innocuous over her head; she fell and threw both her riders. Gerard caught Margaret, but was car-

ried down by her weight and impetus. Thus in a moment the soil was strewed with *dramatis personæ*.

The docile mule was up again directly, and stood trembling. Martin was next, and looking round found out there was but one in pursuit; on this he made the young lovers fly on foot, while he checked the enemy as I have recorded.

He now galloped after his companions, and when after a long race, he caught them, he instantly put Gerard and Margaret on the mule, and ran by their side, till his breath failed, then took his turn to ride, and so in rotation. Thus the runner was always fresh, and long ere they relaxed their speed, all sound and trace of them was hopelessly lost to Dierich and his men. These latter went crestfallen back to look after their chief.

CHAPTER XXVII.

LIFE and liberty, while safe, are little thought of; for why?—they are matters of course. Endangered, they are rated at their real value. In this, too, they are like sunshine, whose beauty men notice not at noon when it is greatest, but toward evening, when it lies in flakes of topaz under shady elms. Yet it is feebler then; but gloom lies beside it and reveals its fire. Thus Gerard and Margaret, though they started at every leaf that rustled louder than its fellows, glowed all over with joy and thankfulness as they glided among the friendly trees in safety and deep tranquil silence, baying dogs and brutal voices yet ringing in their mind's ears.

But presently Gerard found stains of blood on Margaret's ancles.

"Oh, Martin! Martin! help! they have wounded her; the cross-bow!"

"No, no!" said Margaret, smiling to reassure him. "I am not wounded, nor hurt at all."

"But what is it, then, in Heaven's name?" cried Gerard, in great agitation.

"Do not scold me, then!" and Margaret blushed.

"Did I ever scold you?"

"No, dear Gerard. Well, then, Martin said it was blood those cruel dogs followed; so I thought if I could but have a little blood on my shoon the dogs would follow me instead, and let my Gerard win free. So I scratched my arm with Martin's knife—forgive me! Whose else could I take? Yours, Gerard? Ah, no. You forgive me?"

"Let me see this scratch first," said Gerard, choking with emotion. "There, I thought so. A scratch? I call it a cut—a deep, terrible, cruel cut."

Gerard shuddered at sight of it.

"She might have done it with her bodkin," said the soldier. "Milk-sop! that sickens at the sight of a scratch and a little blood."

"No, no. I could look on a sea of blood; but not on hers. Oh, Margaret! how could you be so cruel?"

Margaret smiled with love ineffable. "Foolish Gerard," murmured she, "to make so much of nothing." And she flung the guilty arm round his neck. "As if I would not give all the blood in my heart for you, let alone a few drops from my arm." And the next moment, under the sense of his recent danger, she wept on his neck for pity and love; and he wept with her.

"And I must part from her," he sobbed, "we two that love so dear—one must be in Holland, one in Italy. Ah me! ah me! ah me!"

At this Margaret wept afresh, but patiently and silently. Instinct is never off its guard, and with her unselfishness was an instinct. To utter her present thoughts would be to add to Gerard's misery at parting, so she wept in silence.

Suddenly they emerged upon a beaten path, and Martin stopped.

"This is the bridle-road I spoke of," said he, gravely, "and there away lies the hostelry."

Margaret and Gerard cast a scared look at one another.

"Come a step with me, Martin," whispered Gerard. When he had drawn him aside, he said to him in a broken voice, "Oh, Martin! watch over her for me! She is my wife—yet I leave her. See Martin! here is gold—it was for my journey; it is no use my asking her to take it—she would not; but you will for her, will you not? Oh, Heaven! and is this all I can do for her? Money? But poverty is a curse. You will not let her want for any thing, Martin? The Burgomaster's silver is enough for me."

"Thou art a good lad, Gerard. Neither want nor harm shall come to her. I care more for her little finger than for all the world; and were she naught to me, even for thy sake would I be a father to her. Go with a stout heart, and God be with thee going and coming." And the rough soldier wrung Gerard's hand and turned his head away.

After a moment's silence, he was for going back to Margaret; but Gerard stopped him. "No, good Martin; prithee, stay here behind this thicket, while I—Oh, Martin! Martin!"

By this means Gerard escaped a witness of his anguish at leaving her he loved, and Martin escaped a piteous sight, on which I myself would rather not dwell. He did not see the poor young things kneel and renew before heaven those holy vows cruel men had interrupted. He did not see them cling together like one, and then try to part, and fail, and return to one another, and cling again, like drowning, despairing creatures. But he heard Gerard sob, and sob, and Margaret moan.

At last there was a wild cry, and feet pattered on the hard road.

He started up, and there was Gerard running wildly,

with both hands clasped above his head, in prayer, and Margaret tottering toward him with palms extended piteously, as if for help, and ashy cheek, and eyes fixed on vacancy.

He caught her in his arms, and spoke words of comfort to her; but her mind could not take them in; only at the sound of his voice she held him tight, and trembled violently.

He got her on the mule, and put his arm round her, and so, supporting her frame, which was now all relaxed and powerless, he took her slowly and sadly home.

She did not shed one tear, nor speak one word.

At the edge of the wood he took her off the mule, and bade her go across to her father's house. She did as she was bid.

Martin to Rotterdam. Sevenbergen was too hot for him.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

JORIAN KETEL came to Peter's house to claim Margaret's promise; but Margaret was ill in bed, and Peter, on hearing his errand, affronted him and warned him off the premises, and one or two that stood by were for ducking him; for both father and daughter were favorites, and the whole story was in every mouth, and the Sevenbergans in that state of hot, indiscriminating irritation which accompanies popular sympathy.

So Jorian Ketel went off in dudgeon, and repented him of his good deed. This sort of penitence is not rare, and has the merit of being sincere. Dierich Brower, who was discovered at "The Three Kings," making a chatter-box drunk in order to worm out of him the whereabouts of Martin Wittenhaagen, was actually taken and flung into a horse-pond, and threatened with worse

usage, should he ever show his face in the burgh again ; and finally, municipal jealousy being roused, the Burgo-master of Sevenbergen sent a formal missive to the Burgomaster of Tergou, reminding him he had overstepped the law, and requesting him to apply to the authorities of Sevenbergen on any future occasion when he might have a complaint, real or imaginary, against any of the townsfolk.

The wily Ghysbrecht, suppressing his rage at this remonstrance, sent back a civil message to say that the person he had followed to Sevenbergen was a Tergovan, one Gerard, and that he had stolen the town records ; that Gerard having escaped into foreign parts, and probably taken the documents with him, the whole matter was at an end ; and that he should not think of molesting his friend Peter Brandt, now there was no longer any good to be gained by it.

Thus he made a virtue of necessity. But, in reality, his calmness was but a veil : baffled at Sevenbergen, he turned his views elsewhere. He set his emissaries to learn from the family at Tergou whither Gerard had fled, and to his infinite surprise he found they did not know. This added to his uneasiness. It made him fear Gerard was only lurking in the neighborhood : he would make a certain discovery, and would come back and take a terrible revenge. From this time Dierich and others that were about him noticed a change for the worse in Ghysbrecht Van Swieten. He became a moody, irritable man. A dread lay on him. His eyes were forever casting furtive glances like one who expects a blow, and knows not from what quarter it is to come. Making others wretched had not made him happy. It seldom does. The little family at Tergou, which but for his violent interference might in time have cemented its difference without banishing *spem gregis* to a distant land, wore still the same outward features, but within was no longer the simple happy family this tale opened with.

Little Kate knew the share Cornelis and Sybrandt had had in banishing Gerard, and though, for fear of making more mischief still, she never told her mother, yet there were times she shuddered at the bare sight of them, and blushed at their hypocritical regrets: she could not help it. Catherine, with a woman's vigilance, noticed this, and with a woman's subtlety said nothing, but quietly pondered it, and went on watching for more. The black sheep themselves, in their efforts to partake in the general gloom of sorrow, succeeded so far as to impose upon their father and Giles; but the demure satisfaction that lay at the bottom of them could not escape these feminine eyes—

That, noting all, seem'd naught to note.

Thus mistrust and suspicion sat at the table, poor substitutes for Gerard's intelligent face, that had brightened the whole circle, unobserved till now. As for the old hosier, his pride had been wounded by his son's disobedience, and so he bore stiffly up, and did his best never to mention Gerard's name; but underneath his Spartan cloak Nature might often be seen tugging at his heart-strings. One anxiety he never affected to conceal. "If I but knew where the boy is, and that his life and health are in no danger, small would be my care," would he say; and then a deep sigh would follow. (I can't help thinking that if Gerard had opened the door just then, and walked in, there would have been many tears and embraces for him, and few reproaches, or none.)

One thing took the old couple quite by surprise—publicity. Ere Gerard had been gone a week, his adventures were in every mouth; and, to make matters worse, the popular sympathy declared itself warmly on the side of the lovers, and against Gerard's cruel parents, and that old busy-body the Burgomaster, "who must put his nose into a business that nowise concerned him."

One feeling in Catherine's mind was bitterly strong, and deprived an unfortunate young creature of a sym-

pathy that she lay longing for, though not daring to hope for it.

"Mother," said Kate, "it is all over the town that Margaret is down with a fever—a burning fever; her father fears her sadly."

"Margaret? what Margaret?" inquired Catherine, with a treacherous assumption of calmness and indifference.

"Oh, mother! whom should I mean? Why, Gerard's Margaret."

"Gerard's Margaret!" screamed Catherine; "how dare you say such a word to me? And I rede you never mention that hussy's name in this house, that she has laid bare. She is the ruin of my poor boy—the flower of all my flock. She is the cause that he is not a holy priest in the midst of us, but is roaming the world, and that I am a desolate, broken-hearted mother. There, do not cry, my girl; I do ill to speak harsh to you. But, oh, Kate! you don't know what passes in a mother's heart. I bear up before you all; it behooves me swallow my fears; but at night I see him in my dreams, and always some trouble or other near him: sometimes I see him torn by wild beasts; sometimes he is in the hands of robbers, and their cruel knives uplifted to strike his poor pale face, that one would think would move a stone. Oh! when I think that while I sit here in comfort, perhaps my poor boy lies dead in some savage place—and all along of that girl: there, her very name is rat's-bane to me. I tremble all over when I hear it."

"I'll not say any thing, nor do any thing to grieve you worse, mother," said Kate, tenderly; but she sighed.

She whose name was so fiercely interdicted in this house, was much spoken of, and even pitied, elsewhere. All Sevenbergen was sorry for her, and the young men and maidens cast many a pitying glance, as they passed, at the little window where the beauty of the village lay dying for love. In this familiar phrase they underrated

her spirit and unselfishness. Gerard was not dead, and she was too loyal herself to doubt his constancy. Her father was dear to her and helpless; and, but for bodily weakness, all her love for Gerard would not have kept her from doing her duties, though she might have gone about them with drooping head and heavy heart. But physical and mental excitement had brought on an attack of fever so violent, that nothing but youth and constitution saved her. The malady left her at last, but in that terrible state of bodily weakness in which the patient feels life a burden.

Then it is that love and friendship by the bedside are mortal angels with comfort in their voices, and healing in their palms.

But this poor girl had to come back to life and vigor how she could. Many days she lay alone, and the heavy hours rolled like leaden waves over her. In her enfeebled state existence seemed a burden, and life a thing gone by. She could not try to get well. Gerard was gone. She had not him to get well for. Often she lay for hours quite still, with the tears welling gently out of her eyes.

But one day, waking from an uneasy slumber, she found two women in her room. One was a servant; the other, by the deep fur on her collar and sleeves, was a person of consideration: a narrow band of silvery hair being spared by her coiffure, showed her to be past the age when women of sense conceal their years. The looks of both were kind and friendly. Margaret tried to raise herself in the bed, but the old lady placed a hand very gently on her.

"Lie still, sweetheart; we come not here to put you about, but to comfort you, God willing. Now cheer up a bit, and tell us, first, who think you we are?"

"Nay, madam, I know you, though I never saw you before: you are the Demoiselle Van Eyck, and this is Richt Heynes. Gerard has often spoken of you, and of

your goodness to him. Madam, he has no friend like you near him now," and she lay back, and the tears well-ed out of her eyes.

The good-natured Richt Heynes began to cry for company; but her mistress scolded her. "Well, you are a pretty one for a sick-room," said she: and she put out a world of innocent art to cheer the patient; and not without some little success. An old woman that has seen life and all its troubles is a sovereign blessing by a sorrowful young woman's side. She knows what to say, and what to avoid. She knows how to soothe her and interest her. Ere she had been there an hour she had Margaret's head lying on her shoulder instead of on the pillow, and Margaret's soft eyes dwelling on her with gentle gratitude.

"Ah! this is hair," said the old lady, running her fingers through it. "Come and look at it, Richt!"

Richt came and handled it, and praised it unaffectedly. The poor child that owned it was not quite out of the reach of flattery (owing, no doubt, to her not being dead).

"In sooth, madam, I did use to think it hideous; but *he* praised it, and ever since then I have been almost vain of it, God forgive me. You know how foolish those are that love."

"They are greater fools that don't," said the old lady sharply.

Margaret opened her lovely eyes, and looked at her for her meaning.

This was only the first of many visits. In fact, either Margaret Van Eyck or Richt came nearly every day until their patient was convalescent; and she improved rapidly under their hands. Richt attributed this principally to certain nourishing dishes she prepared in Peter's kitchen; but Margaret herself thought more of the kind words and eyes that kept telling her she had friends to live for. Her gratitude to her old friend was ardent

and touching, and there was no mistaking its depth and sincerity.

Martin Wittenhaagen went straight to Rotterdam, to take the bull by the horns. The bull in question was Philip the Good, duke of this, earl of that, lord of the other. Arrived at Rotterdam, he found the court was at Ghent. To Ghent he went, and sought an audience, but was put off and baffled by lacqueys and pages. So he threw himself in his sovereign's way out hunting, and, contrary to all court precedents, commenced the conversation—by roaring lustily for mercy.

"Why, where is the peril, man?" said the duke, looking all round, and laughing.

"Grace for an old soldier hunted down by burghers!"

Now kings differ in character like other folk; but there is one trait they have in common; they are mightily inclined to be affable to men of very low estate indeed. These do not vie with them in any thing whatever, so jealousy can not creep in; and they amuse them by their bluntness and novelty, and refresh them with a touch of nature—a rarity in courts. So Philip the Good reined in his horse and gave Martin almost a *tête-à-tête*, and Martin reminded him of a certain battle-field where he had received an arrow intended for his sovereign. The Duke remembered the incident perfectly, and was graciously pleased to take a cheerful view of it. He could afford to. Then Martin told his sovereign of Gerard's first capture in the church, his imprisonment in the tower, and the manœuvre by which they got him out, and all the details of the hunt; and, whether he told it better than I have, or that the Duke had not heard so many good stories as you have, certain it is Duke got so excited, that, when a number of courtiers came galloping up and interrupted Martin, he swore like a costermonger and threatened, only half in jest, to cut off the next head

that should come between him and a good story: and when Martin had done, he said:

"St. Luke! what sport goeth on in this mine earldom—ay! in my own woods, and I see it not. You fellows have all the luck." And he was indignant at the partiality of Fortune. "Lo you now! this was a man-hunt!" said he. "*I* never had the luck to be at a man-hunt."

"My luck was none so great," replied Martin, bluntly; "I was on the wrong side of the dogs' noses."

"Ah! so you were: I forgot that." And royalty was almost reconciled to its lot. "What would you then?"

"A free pardon, your highness, for myself and Gerard."

"For what?"

"For prison-breaking."

"Go to: the bird will fly from the cage. 'Tis instinct. Besides, coop a young man up for loving a young woman? These burgomasters must be void of common-sense. What else?"

"For striking down the Burgomaster."

"Oh! the hunted boar will turn to bay. 'Tis his right, and I hold him less than man that grudges it him. What else?"

"For killing of the blood-hounds."

The Duke's countenance fell.

"'Twas their life or mine," said Martin, eagerly.

"Ay! but I can't have my blood-hounds, my beautiful blood-hounds, sacrificed to—"

"No, no, no! They were not your dogs."

"Whose, then?"

"The ranger's."

"Oh. Well, I am very sorry for him, but, as I was saying, I can't have my old soldiers sacrificed to his blood-hounds. Thou shalt have thy free pardon."

"And poor Gerard?"

"And poor Gerard too, for thy sake. And more, tell

thou this Burgomaster his doings mislike me: this is to set up for a king, not a burgomaster. I'll have no kings in Holland but one. Bid him be more humble, or by St. Jude I'll hang him before his own door, as I hanged the Burgomaster of what's the name, some town or other in Flanders it was: no, 'twas somewhere in Brabant — no matter—I hanged him, I remember that much—for oppressing poor folk."

The Duke then beckoned his chancellor, a pursy old fellow that sat his horse like a sack, and bade him write out a free pardon for Martin and one Gerard.

This precious document was drawn up in form and signed next day, and Martin hastened home with it.

Margaret had left her bed some days, and was sitting pale and pensive by the fireside, when he burst in, waving the parchment, and crying, "A free pardon, girl, for Gerard as well as me! Send for him back when you will; all the burgomasters on earth daren't lay a finger on him."

She flushed all over with joy, and her hands trembled with eagerness as she took the parchment, and devoured it with her eyes, and kissed it again and again, and flung her arms round Martin's neck, and kissed *him*. When she was calmer, she told him Heaven had raised her up a friend in the dame Van Eyck. "And I would fain consult her on this good news: but I have not strength to walk so far."

"What need to walk? There is my mule."

"Your mule, Martin?"

The old soldier or professional pillager laughed, and confessed he had got so used to her, that he forgot at times Ghysbrecht had a prior claim. To-morrow he would turn her into the Burgomaster's yard, but to-night she should carry Margaret to Tergou.

It was nearly dusk; so Margaret ventured, and about seven in the evening she astonished and gladdened her new but ardent friend by arriving at her house—with

unwonted roses on her cheeks, and Gerard's pardon in her bosom.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SOME are old in heart at forty, some are young at eighty. Margaret Van Eyck's heart was an evergreen. She loved her young namesake with youthful ardor. Nor was this new sentiment a mere caprice: she was quick at reading character, and saw in Margaret Brandt that which in one of her own sex goes far with an intelligent woman—genuineness. But, besides her own sterling qualities, Margaret Brandt had from the first a potent ally in the old artist's bosom.

Human nature.

Strange as it may appear to the unobservant, our hearts warm more readily to those we have benefited than to our benefactors. Some of the Greek philosophers noticed this; but the British Homer has stamped it in immortal lines:

I heard, and thought how side by side
We two had stemmed the battle's tide
In many a well-debated field,
Where Bertram's breast was Philip's shield.
I thought on Darien's deserts pale,
Where Death bestrides the evening gale,
How o'er my friend my cloak I threw,
And fenceless faced the deadly dew.
I thought on Quariana's cliff,
Where, rescued from our foundering skiff,
Through the white breakers' wrath I bore
Exhausted Mortram to the shore;
And when his side an arrow found,
I sucked the Indian's venom'd wound.
These thoughts like torrents rushed along
To sweep away my purpose strong.

Observe! this assassin's hand is stayed by memory, not of benefits received, but benefits conferred.

Now Margaret Van Eyck had been wonderfully kind to Margaret Brandt; had broken through her own habits to go and see her; had nursed her, and soothed her, and petted her, and cured her more than all the medicine in the world. So her heart opened to the recipient of her goodness, and she loved her now far more tenderly than she had ever loved Gerard, though, in truth, it was purely out of regard for Gerard she had visited her in the first instance.

When, therefore, she saw the unwonted roses on Margaret's cheek, and read the bit of parchment that had brought them there, she gave up her own views without a murmur.

"Sweetheart," said she, "I did desire he should stay in Italy five or six years, and come back rich, and, above all, an artist. But your happiness is before all, and I see you can't live without him, so we must have him home as fast as may be."

"Ah, madam! you divine my very thoughts." And the young woman hung her head a moment and blushed. "But how to let him know, Madam? That passes my skill. He is gone to Italy; but what part, that I know not. Stay! he named the cities he should visit. Florence was one, and Rome. But then—"

Finally, being a sensible girl, she divined that a letter, addressed "My Gerard—Italy," might chance to miscarry, and she looked imploringly at her friend for counsel.

"You are come to the right place, and at the right time," said the old lady. "Here was this Hans Memling with me to-day; he is going to Italy, girl, no later than next week—'to improve his hand,' he says. Not before 'twas needed, I do assure you."

"But how is he to find my Gerard?"

"Why, he knows your Gerard, child. They have supped here more than once, and were like hand and glove. Now, as his business is the same as Gerard's—"

"What! he is a painter then?"

"He passes for one. He will visit the same places as Gerard, and, soon or late, he must fall in with him. Wherefore, get you a long letter written, and copy out this pardon into it, and I'll answer for the messenger. In six months at farthest Gerard shall get it; and when he shall get it, then will he kiss it, and put it in his bosom, and come flying home. What are you smiling at? And now what makes your cheeks so red? And what you are smothering me for, I can not think—My darling! yes! happy days are coming to my little pearl."

Meantime, Martin sat in the kitchen, with the black-jack before him and Richt Heynes spinning beside him: and, wow! but she pumped him that night.

This Hans Memling was an old pupil of Jan Van Eyck and his sister. He was a painter, notwithstanding Margaret's sneer, and a good soul enough, with one fault. He loved the "nipperkin, canakin, and the brown bowl" more than they deserve. This singular penchant kept him from amassing fortune, and was the cause that he often came to Margaret Van Eyck for a meal, and sometimes for a groat. But this gave her a claim on him, and she knew he would not trifle with any commission she should intrust to him.

The letter was duly written, and left with Margaret Van Eyck; and, the following week, sure enough, Hans Memling returned from Flanders. Margaret Van Eyck gave him the letter, and a piece of gold toward his traveling expenses. He seemed in a hurry to be off.

"All the better," said the old artist; "he will be the sooner in Italy."

But as there are horses who burn and rage to start, and after the first yard or two want the whip, so all this hurry cooled into inaction when Hans got as far as the principal hostelry of Tergou, and saw two of his boon companions sitting in the bay window. He went in for a parting glass with them; but when he offered to pay

they would not hear of it. No; he was going a long journey; they would treat him—every body must treat him, the landlord and all.

It resulted from this treatment that his tongue got as loose as if the wine had been oil; and he confided to the convivial crew that he was going to show the Italians how to paint: next he sang his exploits in battle, for he had handled a pike; and his amorous successes with females, luckily not present to oppose their version of the incidents. In short, "*plenus rimarum erat: huc illuc diffuebat:*" and among the miscellaneous matters that oozed out, he must blab that he was intrusted with a letter to a townsman of theirs, one Gerard, a good fellow. He added: "you are all good fellows:" and he slapped Sybrandt on the back so heartily, that the breath was driven out of his body.

Sybrandt on this got a long way off; but listened to every word, and learned for the first time that Gerard was gone to Italy. However, to make sure, he affected to doubt it.

"My brother Gerard is never in Italy."

"Ye lie, ye cur," roared Hans, taking instantly the irascible turn, and not remarking that he who now sat opposite him was the same he had eulogized, and hit, when beside him. "If he was ten times your brother, he is in Italy. What call ye this? There, read me that superscription!" and he flung down a letter on the table.

Sybrandt took it up and examined it gravely; but eventually laid it down, with the remark that he could not read. However, one of the company, by some immense fortuity, could read: and, proud of so rare an accomplishment, took it, and read it out: "To Gerard Gerardssoen, of Tergou. These by the hand of the trusty Hans Hemling, with all speed."

"'Tis excellently well writ," said the reader, examining every letter.

"Ay!" said Hans, bombastically, "and small wonder;

'tis writ by a famous hand; by Margaret, sister of Jan Van Eyck. Blessed and honored be his memory! She is an old friend of mine, is Margaret Van Eyck."

Miscellaneous Hans then diverged into forty topics.

Sybrandt stole out of the company, and went in search of Cornelis.

They put their heads together over the news: Italy was an immense distance off. If they could only keep him there?

"Keep him there? Nothing would keep him long from his Margaret."

"Curse her!" said Sybrandt. "Why didn't she die when she was about it?"

"*She* die! She would outlive the pest to vex us." And he was wroth at her selfishness in not dying, to oblige.

These two black sheep kept putting their heads together, and tainting each other worse and worse, till at last their corrupt hearts conceived a plan for keeping Gerard in Italy all his life, and so securing his share of their father's substance.

But when they had planned it they were no nearer the execution; for that required talent: so iniquity came to a stand still. But presently, as if Satan had come between the two heads, and whispered into the right ear of one and the left of the other simultaneously, they both burst out at once with the same word,

"THE BURGOMASTER!"

They went to Ghysbrecht Van Swieten, and he received them at once: for the man who is under the torture of suspense catches eagerly at knowledge. Certainty is often painful, but seldom, like suspense, intolerable.

"You have news of Gerard?" said he eagerly.

Then they told him about the letter and Hans Memling. He listened with restless eye. "Who writ this letter?"

"Margaret Van Eyck," was the reply : for they naturally thought the contents were by the same hand as the superscription.

"Are ye sure?" And he went to a drawer and drew out a paper written by Margaret Van Eyck while treating with the Burgh for her house. "Was it writ like this?"

"Yes. 'Tis the same writing," said Sybrandt, boldly.

"Good! And now what would ye of me?" said Ghysbrecht, with beating heart, but a carelessness so well feigned that it staggered them. They fumbled with their bonnets, and stammered and spoke a word or two, then hesitated and beat about the bush, and let out by degrees that they wanted a letter written, to say something that would be sure to keep Gerard in Italy, and this letter they proposed to substitute in Hans Memling's wallet for the one he carried. While these fumbled with their bonnets and their iniquity, and vacillated between respect for a burgomaster, and their knowledge that this one was as great a rogue as themselves, and, somehow or other, on their side against Gerard, pros and cons were coursing one another to and fro in the keen old man's spirit. Vengeance said let Gerard come back and feel the weight of the law. Prudence said keep him a thousand miles off. But then prudence said also, why do dirty work on a doubtful chance? Why put it in the power of these two rogues to tarnish your name? Finally, his strong persuasion that Gerard was in possession of a secret by means of which he could wound him to the quick, coupled with his caution, resulted thus: "It is my duty to aid the citizens that can not write. But for their matter I will not be responsible. Tell me, then, what I shall write."

"Something about this Margaret."

"Ay, ay! that she is false, that she is married to another, I'll go bail."

"Nay, Burgomaster, nay! not for all the world!" cried

Sybrandt; "Gerard would not believe it, or but half, and then he would come back to see. No; say that she is dead."

"Dead! what at her age? will he credit that?"

"Sooner than the other. Why she *was nearly* dead, so it is not to say a downright lie, after all."

"Humph? And you think that will keep him in Italy?"

"We are sure of it, are we not, Cornelis?"

"Ay," said Cornelis, "our Gerard will never leave Italy now he is there. It was always his dream to get there. He would come back for his Margaret, but not for us. What cares he for us? He despises his own family—always did."

"This would be a bitter pill to him," said the old hypocrite.

"It will be for his good in the end," replied the young one.

"What avails Famine wedding Thirst," said Cornelis.

"And the grief you are preparing for him so coolly?" Ghysbrecht spoke sarcastically, but tasted his own vengeance all the time.

"Oh, a lie is not like a blow with a curtal axe. It hacks no flesh, and breaks no bones."

"A curtal axe!" said Sybrandt; "no, nor even like a stroke with a cudgel!" and he shot a sly envenomed glance at the Burgomaster's broken nose.

Ghysbrecht's face turned white with ire when this adler's tongue struck his wound. But it told, as intended: the old man bristled with hate.

"Well," said he, "tell me what to write for you, and I must write it: but, take notice, you bear the blame if aught turns amiss. Not the hand which writes, but the tongue which dictates, doth the deed."

The brothers assented warmly, sneering within. Ghysbrecht then drew his inkhorn toward him, and laid the specimen of Margaret Van Eyck's writing before him,

and made some inquiries as to the size and shape of the letter; when an unlooked-for interruption occurred; Jorian Ketel burst hastily into the room, and looked vexed at not finding him alone.

"Thou seest I have matter on hand, good fellow."

"Ay; but this is grave. I bring good news; but 'tis not for every ear."

The Burgomaster rose, and drew Jorian aside into the embrasure of his deep window, and then the brothers heard them converse in low but eager tones. It ended by Ghysbrecht sending Jorian out to saddle his mule. He then addressed the black sheep with a sudden coldness that amazed them:

"I value the peace of families; but this is not a thing to be done in a hurry: we will see about it, we will see."

"But, Burgomaster, the man will be gone. It will be too late."

"Where is he?"

"At the hostelry, drinking."

"Well, keep him drinking. We will see, we will see." And he sent them off discomfited.

To explain all this we must retrograde a step. This very morning, then, Margaret Brandt had met Jorian Ketel near her own door. He passed her with a scowl. This struck her and she remembered him.

"Stay," said she. "Yes! it is the good man who saved him. Oh! why have you not been near me since? And why have you not come for the parchments? Was it not true about the hundred crowns?"

Jorian gave a snort; but, seeing her face that looked so candid, began to think there might be some mistake. He told her he had come, and how he had been received.

"Alas!" said she, "I knew naught of this. I lay at death's door." She then invited him to follow her, and took him into the garden and showed him the spot

where the parchments were buried. "Martin was for taking them up, but I would not let him. *He* put them there, and I said none should move them but you, who had earned them so well of him and me."

"Give me a spade!" cried Jorian, eagerly. "But, stop! No; he is a suspicious man. You are sure they are there still?"

"Sure? I will openly take the blame if human hand hath touched them."

"Then keep them but two hours more, I prithee, good Margaret," said Jorian, and ran off to the Stadthouse of Tergou a joyful man.

The rest you have divined.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE Burgomaster was also a joyful man as he jogged along toward Sevenbergen, with Jorian striding beside him, giving him assurance that in an hour's time the missing parchments would be in his hand.

"Ah! master," said he, "lucky for us it wasn't a thief that took them."

"Not a thief? not a thief? what call you him, then?"

"Well, saving your presence, I call him a jackdaw. This is a piece of jackdaw's work, if ever there was; take the thing you are least in want of, and hide it—that's a jackdaw. I should know," added Jorian, oracularly, "for I was brought up with a jackdaw. He and I were born the same year, but he cut his teeth long before me, and, wow! but my life was a burden for years all along of him. If you had but a hole in your hose no bigger than a groat, in went his beak like a gimlet; and in the matter of stealing, he was Gerard all over. What he wanted least, and any poor Christian in the house wanted most, that went first. Mother was a notable woman, so if she did but look round, away flew her

thimble. Father lived by cordwaining, so about sunrise Jack went diligently away with his awl, his wax, and his twine. After that, make your bread how you could! One day I heard my mother tell him to his face he was enough to corrupt half a dozen children; and he only cocked his eye at her, and next minute away with the nursing's shoe off his very foot. Now this Gerard is tarred with the same stick. The parchments are no more unto him than a thimble or an awl to Jack. He took 'em out of pure mischief and hid them, and you would never have found them but for me."

"I believe you are right," said Ghysbrecht, "and I have vexed myself more than need."

When they came to Peter's gate he felt uneasy.

"I wish it had been any where but here."

Jorian reassured him.

"The girl is honest and friendly," said he. "She had nothing to do with taking them, I'll be sworn!" and he led him into the garden. "There, master, if a face is to be believed, here they lie; and, see, the mould is loose."

He ran for a spade which was stuck up in the ground at some distance, and soon went to work and uncovered a parchment. Ghysbrecht saw it, and thrust him aside and went down on his knees and tore it out of the hole. His hands trembled and his face shone. He threw out parchment after parchment, and Jorian dusted them and cleaned them and shook them. Now, when Ghysbrecht had thrown out a great many, his face began to darken and lengthen, and when he came to the last he put his hands to his temples and seemed to be all amazed. Then a chill traversed his frame.

"What mystery lies here?" he gasped. "Are fiends mocking me? Dig deeper! There *must* be another!"

Jorian drove the spade in and threw out quantities of hard mould. In vain. And even while he dug, his master's mood had changed.

"Treason! treachery!" he cried. "You knew of this!"

"Knew what, master, in Heaven's name?"

"Caitiff, you knew there was another one worth all these twice told."

"'Tis false!" cried Jorian, made suspicious by the other's suspicion. "'Tis a trick to rob me of my hundred crowns. Oh! I know you, Burgomaster." And Jorian was ready to whimper.

A sweet voice fell on them both like oil upon the waves. "No, good man, it is not false, nor yet is it quite true: there was another parchment."

"There, there, there! Where is it?"

"But," continued Margaret calmly, "it was not a town record (so you have gained your hundred crowns, good man): it was but a private deed between the Burgomaster here and my grandfather Flor—"

"Hush, hush!"

"—is Brandt."

"Where is it, girl? that is all we want to know."

"Have patience, and I shall tell you. Gerard read the title of it, and he said, 'This is as much yours as the Burgomaster's,' and he put it apart, to read it with me at his leisure."

"It is in the house, then?" said the Burgomaster, recovering his calmness.

"No, sir," said Margaret, gravely, "it is not." Then, in a broken voice, "You hunted—my poor Gerard—so hard—and so close—that you gave him—no time—to think of aught—but his life—and his grief. The parchment was in his bosom, and he hath ta'en it with him."

"Whither, whither?"

"Ask me no more, sir. What right have you to question me thus? It was for *your* sake, good man, I put force upon my heart, and bore to speak at all to this hard old man. For, when I think of the misery he has brought on *him* and me, the sight of him is almost more than I

can bear:" and she gave an involuntary shudder, and went away crying bitterly.

Remorse for the past, and dread of the future, the slow, but, as he now felt, the inevitable future, avarice and fear, all tugged in one short moment at this tough heart. Ghysbrecht hung his head, and his arms fell listless by his sides. A coarse chuckle made him start round, and there stood Martin Wittenhaagen leaning on his bow, and sneering from ear to ear. At sight of the man and his grinning face, Ghysbrecht's worse passions awoke.

"Ho! attack him, seize him, traitor and thief!" cried he. "Dog, thou shalt pay for all."

Martin, without a word, calmly produced the Duke's pardon. Ghysbrecht looked and had not a word to say. Martin followed up his advantage.

"The Duke and I are soldiers. He won't let you greasy burghers trample on an old comrade. He bade me carry you a message too."

"The Duke send a message to me?"

"Ay! I told him of your masterful doings, of your imprisoning Gerard for loving a girl, and says he, 'Tell him this is to be a king, not a burgomaster. I'll have no kings in Holland but one. Bid him be more humble, or I'll hang him at his own door—'"

Ghysbrecht trembled. He thought the Duke capable of the deed.

"—as I hanged the Burgomaster of Thingembob.' The Duke could not mind which of you he had hung, or in what part; such trifles don't stick in a soldier's memory, but he was sure he had hanged one of you for grinding poor folk, 'and I'm the man to hang another,' said the good Duke."

These repeated insults from so mean a man, coupled with his invulnerability, shielded as he was by the Duke, drove the choleric old man into a fit of impotent fury; he shook his fist at the soldier, and tried to threaten him, but could not speak for the rage and mortification that

choked him: then he gave a sort of screech, and coiled himself up in eye and form like a rattlesnake about to strike; and spat furiously upon Martin's doublet.

The thick-skinned soldier treated this ebullition with genuine contempt. "Here's a venomous old toad! he knows a kick from this foot would send him to his last home; and he wants me to cheat the gallows. But I have slain too many men in fair fight to lift limb against any thing less than a man: and this I count no man. What is it, in Heaven's name? An old goat's-skin bag full o' rotten bones."

"My mule! my mule!" screamed Ghysbrecht.

Jorian helped the old man up, trembling in every joint. Once in the saddle, he seemed to gather in a moment unnatural vigor; and the figure that went flying to Tergou was truly weird-like and terrible: so old and wizened the face; so white and reverend the streaming hair; so baleful the eye; so fierce the fury which shook the bent frame that went spurring like mad; while the quavering voice yelled, "I'll make their hearts ache!—I'll make their hearts ache!—I'll make their hearts ache!—I'll make their hearts ache! All of them! All!—all!—all!"

The black sheep sat disconsolate amid the convivial crew, and eyed Hans Memling's wallet. For more ease he had taken it off, and flung it on the table. How readily they could have taken out that letter and put in another. For the first time in their lives they were sorry they had not learned to write, like their brother.

And now Hans Memling began to talk of going, and the brothers agreed in a whisper to abandon their project for the time. They had scarcely resolved this, when Dierich Brower stood suddenly in the door-way, and gave them a wink.

They went to him. "Come to the Burgomaster with all speed," said he.

They found Ghysbrecht seated at a table, pale and agitated. Before him lay Margaret Van Eyck's handwriting. "I have written what you desired," said he. "Now for the superscription. What were the words? did ye see?"

"We can not read," said Cornelis.

"Then is all this labor lost," cried Ghysbrecht angrily. "Dolts!"

"Nay, but," said Sybrandt, "I heard the words read, and I have not lost them. They were, 'To Gerard Gerardssoen, these by the hands of the trusty Hans Memling with all speed.'"

"'Tis well. Now, how was the letter folded? how big was it?"

"Longer than this one, and not so long as this."

"'Tis well. Where is he?"

"At the hostelry."

"Come, then, take you this groat, and treat him. Then ask to see the letter, and put this in place of it. Come to me with the other letter."

The brothers assented, took the letter, and went to the hostelry.

They had not been gone a minute, when Dierich Brower issued from the Stadthouse, and followed them. He had his orders not to let them out of his sight till the true letter was in his master's hands. He watched outside the hostelry.

He had not long to wait. They came out almost immediately, with downcast looks. Dierich made up to them.

"Too late!" they cried; "too late! He is gone!"

"Gone! How long?"

"Scarce five minutes. Cursed chance!"

CHAPTER XXXI.

"You must come to the Burgomaster at once," said Dierich Brower.

"To what end?"

"No matter; come:" and he hurried them to the Stadthouse.

Ghysbrecht Van Swieten was not the man to accept a defeat. "Well," said he, on hearing the ill news, "suppose he is gone. Is he mounted?"

"No."

"Then what hinders you to come up with him?"

"But what avails coming up with him? there are no hostelries on the road he is gone."

"Fools!" said Ghysbrecht, "is there no way of emptying a man's pockets but liquor and sleight of hand?"

A meaning look, that passed between Ghysbrecht and Dierich, aided the brothers' comprehension. They changed color, and lost all zeal for the business.

"No! no! we won't get ourselves hanged to spite Gerard," said Sybrandt; "that would be a fool's trick."

"Hanged?" cried Ghysbrecht. "Am I not the Burgomaster? How can ye be hanged? I see how 'tis: ye fear to tackle one man, being two: hearts of hare, that ye are! Oh! why can not I be young again? I'd do it single-handed."

The old man now threw off all disguise, and showed them his heart was in this deed. He then flattered and besought, and jeered them alternately, but he found no eloquence could move them to an action, however dishonorable, which was attended with danger. At last he opened a drawer, and showed them a pile of silver coins.

"Change but those letters for me," he said, "and each

of you shall thrust one hand into this drawer and take away as many of them as you can hold."

The effect was magical. Their eyes glittered with desire. Their whole bodies seemed to swell, and rise into male energy.

"Swear it, then," said Sybrandt.

"I swear it."

"No. On the crucifix."

Ghysbrecht swore upon the crucifix.

The next minute the brothers were on the road, in pursuit of Hans Hemling. They came in sight of him about two leagues from Tergou; but though they knew he had no weapon but his staff, they were too prudent to venture on him in daylight; so they fell back.

But being now three leagues and more from the town, and on a grassy road—sun down, moon not yet up—honest Hans suddenly found himself attacked before and behind at once by men with uplifted knives, who cried in loud though somewhat shaky voices, "Stand and deliver."

The attack was so sudden, and so well planned, that Hans was dismayed. "Slay me not, good fellows," he cried: "I am but a poor man, and ye shall have my all."

"So be it, then. Live! But empty thy wallet."

"There is naught in my wallet, good friends, but one letter."

"That we shall see," said Sybrandt, who was the one in front. "Well: it *is* a letter."

"Take it not from me, I pray you. 'Tis worth naught, and the good dame would fret that writ it."

"There," said Sybrandt, "take back thy letter: and now empty thy pouch. Come! tarry not!"

But by this time Hans had recovered his confusion: and, by a certain flutter in Sybrandt, and hard breathing of Cornelis, aided by an indescribable consciousness, felt sure the pair he had to deal with were no heroes. He pretended to fumble for his money: then suddenly thrust

his staff firmly into Sybrandt's face, and drove him staggering, and lent Cornelis a back-handed slash on the ear that sent him twirling: then whirled his weapon over his head and danced about the road like a man on springs, shouting "Come on, ye thieving loons! Come on!"

By "come," they understood "go," took to their heels directly, with Hans after them, he shouting "Stop thieves!" and they howling with fear and pain as they ran.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ABOUT this time a change passed over Margaret Brandt. She went about her household duties like one in a dream. If Peter did but speak a little quickly to her, she started and fixed two terrified eyes on him. She went less often to her friend Margaret Van Eyck, and was ill at her ease when there. Instead of meeting her warm old friend's caresses, she used to receive them passive and trembling, and sometimes almost shrink from them. But the most extraordinary thing was she never would go outside her own house in daylight. When she went to Tergou it was after dusk, and she returned before daybreak. She would not even go to matins. At last Peter, unobservant as he was, noticed it, and asked her the reason.

"THE FOLK ALL LOOK AT ME SO."

One day, Margaret Van Eyck asked her what was the matter. A scared look and a flood of tears were all the reply: the old lady expostulated gently. "What, sweetheart, afraid to confide your sorrows to me?"

"I have no sorrows, madam, but of my own making. I am kinder treated than I deserve, especially in this house."

"Then why not come oftener, my dear?"

"I come oftener than I deserve:" and she sighed deeply.

"There, Richt is crying out for you," said Margaret Van Eyck; "go, child! what on earth can it be?"

Turning possibilities over in her mind, she thought Margaret must be mortified at the contempt with which she was treated by Gerard's family. "I will take them to task for it, at least such of them as are women;" and the very next day she put on her hood and cloak, and followed by Richt went to the hosier's house. Catherine received her with much respect, and thanked her with tears for her kindness to Gerard. But when, encouraged by this, her visitor diverged to Margaret Brandt, Catherine's eyes dried, and her lips turned to half the size, and she looked as only obstinate, ignorant women can look. When they put on this cast of features, you might as well try to soften or convince a brick wall. Margaret Van Eyck tried, but all in vain. So then, not being herself used to be thwarted, she got provoked, and at last went out hastily with an abrupt and mutilated courtesy, which Catherine returned with an air rather of defiance than obeisance. Outside the door Margaret Van Eyck found Richt conversing with a pale girl on crutches. Margaret Van Eyck was passing them with heightened color, and a scornful toss intended for the whole family, when suddenly a little delicate hand glided timidly into hers, and looking round she saw two dove-like eyes, with the water in them, that sought hers gratefully, and, at the same time, imploringly. The old lady read this wonderful look, complex as it was, and down went her choler. She stooped and kissed Kate's brow. "I see," said she. "Mind, then, I leave it to you." Returned home, she said, "I have been to a house to-day where I have seen a very common thing and a very uncommon thing: I have seen a stupid, obstinate woman, and I have seen an angel in the flesh, with a face—if I had it here I'd take down my brushes once more, and try and paint it."

Little Kate did not belie the good opinion so hastily formed of her. She waited a better opportunity, and told her mother what she had learned from Richt Heynes, that Margaret had shed her very blood for Gerard in the wood.

"See, mother, how she loves him."

"Who would not love him?"

"Oh, mother, think of it! Poor thing!"

"Ay, wench. She has her own trouble, no doubt, as well as we ours. I can't abide the sight of blood, let alone my own."

This was a point gained; but when Kate tried to follow it up she was stopped short.

About a month after this a soldier of the Dalgetty tribe, returning from service in Tuscany, brought a letter one evening to the hosier's house. He was away on business: but the rest of the family sat at supper. The soldier laid the letter on the table by Catherine, and telling them he had his guerdon for bringing it, went off to Sevenbergen.

Although for a long time they had hoped and expected this, yet when it did come it took them by surprise.

The letter was unfolded and spread out: and curiously enough, though not one of them could read, they could all tell it was Gerard's handwriting.

"And your father must be away," cried Catherine. "Are ye not ashamed of yourselves? not one that can read your brother's letter?"

But although the words were to them what hieroglyphics are to us, there was something in the letter they could read. There is an art can speak without words: unfettered by the penman's limits, it can steal through the eye into the heart, and brain, alike of the learned and unlearned, and it can cross a frontier or a sea, yet lose nothing. It is at the mercy of no translator: for it writes a universal language.

When, therefore, they saw this,

which Gerard had drawn with his pencil between the two short paragraphs of which his letter consisted, they read it, and it went straight to their hearts.

Gerard was bidding them farewell.

As they gazed on that simple sketch, in every turn and line of which they recognized his manner, Gerard seemed present, and bidding them farewell.

The women wept over it till they could see it no longer.

Giles said, "Poor Gerard!" in a lower voice than seemed to belong to him.

Even Cornelis and Sybrandt felt a momentary remorse, and sat eying it gloomily.

But how to get the words read to them. They were loth to show their ignorance and emotion to a stranger.

"The Dame Van Eyck?" said Kate, timidly.

"And so I will, Kate. She has a good heart. She loves Gerard, too. She will be glad to hear of him. I was short with her when she came here, but I will make my submission, and then she will tell me what my poor child says to me."

She was soon at Margaret Van Eyck's house. Richt took her into a room, and said, "Bide a minute; she is at her orisons."

There was a young woman in the room seated pensively by the stove; but she rose and courteously made way for the visitor.

"Thank you, young lady; the winter nights are cold, and your stove is inviting." Catherine then, while warming her hands, inspected her companion furtively from

head to foot, both inclusive. The young person wore an ordinary wimple, but her gown was trimmed with fur, which was, in those days, almost a sign of superior rank or wealth. But what most struck Catherine was the candor and modesty of the face. She felt sure of sympathy from so good a countenance, and began to gossip.

"Now, what think you brings me here, young lady? It is a letter: a letter from my poor boy that is far away in some savage part or other. And I take shame to say that none of us can read it. I wonder whether you can read."

"Yes."

"Can ye, now? It is much to your credit, my dear. I dare say she won't be long; but every minute is an hour to a poor longing mother."

"I will read it to you."

"Bless you, my dear; bless you!"

In her unfeigned eagerness she never noticed the suppressed eagerness with which the hand was slowly put out to take the letter. She did not see the tremor with which the fingers closed on it.

"Come, then, read it to me, prithee. I am wearying for it."

"The first words are, 'To my honored parents.'"

"Ay! and he always did honor us, poor soul."

"God and the saints have you in his holy keeping, and bless you by night and by day. Your one harsh deed is forgotten; your years of love remembered."

Catherine laid her hand on her bosom, and sank back in her chair with one heart-broken sob.

"Then comes this, madam. It speaks for itself. A long adieu."

"Ay, go on, bless you, girl; you give me sorry comfort. Still, 'tis comfort."

"To my brothers Cornelis and Sybrandt. Be content. You will see me no more!"

"What does that mean? Ah! has he seen what I have: or more?"

"To my sister Kate. Little angel of my father's house. Be kind to *her*—' Ah!"

"That is Margaret Brandt, my dear—his sweetheart, poor soul. I've not been kind to her. Forgive me, Gerard!"

"For poor Gerard's sake: since grief to her is death—to—me—' Ah!" And nature, resenting the poor girl's struggle for unnatural composure, suddenly gave way, and she sank from her chair and lay insensible, with her head on Catherine's knees.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

EXPERIENCED women are not frightened when a woman faints, nor do they hastily attribute it to any thing but those physical causes which they have often seen produce it. Catherine bustled about; laid the girl down with her head on the floor quite flat, opened the window, and unloosed her dress as she lay. Not till she had done all this did she step to the door and say, rather loudly,

"Come here, if you please."

Margaret Van Eyck and Richt came and found Margaret lying quite flat, and Catherine beating her hands.

"Oh, my poor girl, what has happened!"

"Nothing, madam; nothing more than is natural in her situation."

"My poor Margaret!"

"Margaret! What, not Margaret Brandt?"

"Yes! this is the poor girl you are so bitter against. She is coming to, thank heaven!"

"Me bitter? Well, so I was; but my heart is turned toward her somehow, as she was my own child—all in one moment. What, sweetheart? Be not frightened,

none are here but friends. And to think of my setting her to read me the letter—poor thing!”

They seated her in an easy-chair. As the color was creeping back to her face and lips, Catherine drew Margaret Van Eyck aside.

“I would not let her go home to-night.”

To enforce this she whispered a few words. Margaret Van Eyck started at them, and without going out of a whisper, went into a passion.

“It’s false! it is a calumny! it is monstrous! Look at her face. It is blasphemy to accuse such a face.”

“Tut! tut! tut!” said the other, “you might as well say this is not my hand! I ought to know. I have had a dozen, besides the numbers I have seen. I tell ye it is so.”

And much to Margaret Van Eyck’s surprise she went up to the girl, and, taking her round the neck, kissed her warmly. “I suffered for Gerard, and you shed your blood for him, I do hear: his own words show me I have been to blame. I’ve held aloof from you. But I’ll make it up to you once I begin. You are my daughter from this hour.”

Another warm embrace sealed this hasty compact, and the woman of impulse was gone.

Margaret lay back in her chair, and a feeble smile stole over her face. Gerard’s mother had kissed her and called her daughter. But the next moment she saw her old friend looking at her with a solemnity and sadness that were quite new. She slid from her chair to her knees and prayed piteously to the old dame for pardon. From the words and the manner of her penitence a bystander would have gathered she had inflicted some cruel wrong and intolerable insult upon her venerable friend.

The little party at the hosier’s house sat at table discussing the recent event, when their mother returned, and, casting a piercing glance all round the little circle, laid the letter flat on the table. She repeated every

word of it, following the lines with her finger, then suddenly lifting her head she cast another keen look on Cornelis and Sybrandt: their eyes fell. Then the storm that had long been brewing burst on their heads.

Catherine seemed to swell like an angry hen ruffling her feathers, and out of her mouth came a Rhone and Saone of wisdom and twaddle, of great and mean invective, such as no male that ever was born could utter in one current; and not many women. "I have long had my doubts that you blew the flame betwixt Gerard and your father, and set that old rogue Ghysbrecht on. And now here are Gerard's own written words to prove it. You have driven your own flesh and blood into a far land, and robbed the mother that bore you of her darling, the pride of her eye, the joy of her heart. But you are of a piece from end to end. When you were all boys together, my others were a comfort, but you were a curse: mischievous and sly, and it took a woman half her day to keep your clothes whole. For why? work wears cloth, but play cuts it. With the beard comes prudence, but none came to you. Still the last to go to bed, and the last to leave it; and why? because honesty goes to bed early, and industry rises betimes. Where there are two lie-a-beds in a house, there are a pair of ne'er-do-weels. Often I've sat and looked at your ways and wondered where you came from. You don't take after your father, and you are no more like me than a wasp is to an ant. Sure you were changed in the cradle, or the cuckoo dropped ye on my floor: for you have not our hands, nor our hearts; of all my blood none but you ever jeered them that God afflicted; but often when my back was turned I've heard you mock at Giles, because he is not so big as some, and at my lily Kate (that is poor dear Gerard's word), because she is not so strong as a Flanders mare. After that rob a church an' you will, for you can be no worse in his eyes that made both Kate and Giles, and in mine that suffered for them, poor

darlings, as I did for you, you paltry, unfeeling, treasonable curs! No, I will not hush, my daughter, they have filled the cup too full. It takes a deal to turn a mother's heart against the sons she has nursed upon her knees; and many is the time I have winked and wouldn't see too much, and bitten my tongue lest their father should know them as I do; he would have put them to the door that moment. But now they have filled the cup too full. And where got ye all this money? You never wrought for it. I wish I may never hear from other mouths how ye got it. Sloth and greed are ill-mated, my masters: lovers of money must sweat or steal. Well, if you robbed a traveler of it, it was some woman I'll go bail, for a man would drive you with his naked hand. No matter; it is good for one thing, it has shown me how you will guide our gear if ever it comes to be yourn.

"I have watched you, my lads, this while—you have spent a groat a day between you, and I spend scarce a groat a week, and keep you all, good and bad. No! give up waiting for the shoes that will, may be, walk behind your coffin, for this shop and this house shall never be yours. Gerard is our heir—poor Gerard whom you have banished and done your best to kill; never call me mother again! But you have only made him tenfold dearer to me. My poor lost boy! I shall soon see him again, shall hold him in my arms and set him on my knees. Oh, you may stare. You are too clever, and yet not clever enough. You cut the stalk away, but you left the seed—the seed that shall outgrow you, and outlive you. Margaret Brandt is quick, and it is Gerard's, and what is Gerard's is mine, and I have prayed the saints it may be a boy, and it will—it must. Oh, Kate, when I found it was so, my bowels yearned over her child unborn as if it had been my own!

"He is our heir. He will outlive us. You will not; for a bad heart in a carcass is like the worm in a nut; soon brings the body to dust. So, Kate, take down

Gerard's bib and tucker that are in the drawer you wot of, and to-morrow we will carry them to Sevenbergen. We will borrow Peter Buysken's cart and go comfort Gerard's wife under her burden. She is his wife. Who is Ghysbrecht Van Swieten? Can he come between a couple and the altar, and sunder those that God and the priest make one? She is my daughter; and I am as proud of her as I am of you, Kate: and as for *you*, keep out of my way awhile, for you are like the black dog in my eyes."

Cornelis and Sybrandt took the hint and slunk out, aching with remorse, and impenitence, and hate. They kept out of her sight for days; and she never spoke to them again about their conduct. *Liberaverat animam suam.*

CHAPTER XXXIV.

GHYSBRECHT VAN SWIETEN heard no more of the black sheep for two days. Then they came and produced the letter they had taken from Hans Memling before he leathered them—and claimed their reward. The drawer was opened, and in went their hands. Sybrandt had slyly glued his without telling Cornelis, for black sheep are not always loyal to one another: so some small coins stuck to the back of his hand, and he got more for his soul than his brother did. When they were gone Ghysbrecht opened the letter, and found, to his surprise, it was written by Margaret Brandt. In it the poor girl revealed her situation to her lover, and besought him tenderly to return and save her honor. Her love and her sorrow had found words so simple and touching that Ghysbrecht felt a deeper pang of remorse than ever, and cursed the hour he had fallen into the views of Cornelis and Sybrandt. But it was too late.

Hans was far away with the fatal letter to tell Gerard Margaret was dead.

While Ghysbrecht was in this state, he received a summons to answer a charge made against him by the bishop of the diocese, for entering a church profanely, and interrupting the sacrament of marriage by force and arms.

The curé of Sevenbergen was a mild man, and had submitted to that insult: but he related it months afterward to others of the clergy, and they took it up instantly with ardor, and an esprit du corps, that boded ill for the lay defendant. Soon the lawyers had their word: and after much discussion they settled it thus: That on a special and written authority from the father of either bride or bridegroom, the magistrate might stop a marriage even at the altar, provided he did it decently, and sine strepitu, and in a certain form, viz., by a writ first delivered to the officiating priest: but that on a general authority naming no time nor place, or on an unwritten authority, he could do no act of such weight, this being an interference with the clergy in their proper functions, and in domicilio sancto. On the above particulars a month was given Ghysbrecht to furnish evidence. But this decision was in reality fatal to him. He had no written authority from Gerard senior. He had not done his act in the form by law prescribed, and by no means sine strepitu. Weighing this, and knowing from Martin Wittenhaagen that the Duke was prejudiced against him, he was deeply dejected. In which state a still heavier blow fell on him.

CHAPTER XXXV.

GERARD, who had all his parent's economy, intended to make his pen defray the expenses of his journey. But when he got into Germany he found the art of printing universal, and so beautifully executed that he could not go beyond it. Besides

Imprimit una dies quantum non scribitur anno.

He had the modesty and the sense to see that the best man can't vie with good machinery. He pushed on to Italy, afraid printing would get there before him. The Burgomaster's money enabled him to travel more quickly than most pedestrians; but when he got to Florence his funds had sadly dwindled. He found no printing to speak of at Florence, and a great demand for scribes.

But alas! the run was mainly upon Greek MSS., and Gerard, though he knew the Greek character, had no skill to write it. But he set to work with a will and practiced it. When he had, at last, mastered it, he thought he would prepare a specimen of his powers, surrounded with a border of fruit and leaves.

Should he buy a fair piece of vellum to lay it on? No; he was Catherine's son: why buy what he had by him? That old deed was on fair vellum: it was dirty, but then he had a receipt for cleaning vellum. He laid the deed on the table and took his knife to cut it in half, intending to glue the written faces of the two halves together, and so make a glorious solid sheet.

Now, as he bent over it, a word or two excited his curiosity. "Gently," said he; "let me not destroy it till I know what it is: it belongs to *her*."

Accordingly he read it; and, as he read it, his cheeks got hot, and his heart began to beat. When he had read it, he studied it; and the more he studied it, the more sure he was that there was something much better to be done with it than copy Plutarch on it.

He sat reading and pondering it; and so absorbed that he missed the sight of a face from Holland. Hans Memling passed his little window twice, but Gerard never saw him.

At peep of day Gerard left Florence.

Friend and foe had shot at him with love and with hate, and each missed him alike. Neither Margaret's imploring cry to him to return reached him, nor did the

false report of her death reach him, though it grazed so horribly near him.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MARGARET stole away to Sevenbergen at peep of day ; there she found the soldier had left her a long letter from Gerard. The thousand tender words of love filled her with joy ; but the letter was dated from Florence, and the distance filled her with dismay. "Oh, Gerard !" she cried, "why are you so far from me ? What will become of me if you get not my letter ? I shall die disgraced, for live ashamed I can not." Soon after breakfast Catherine came, true to her promise, and was so warm, so cheerful, and motherly, that she revived the drooping flower. Little Kate was unable to come. She was in more pain than usual. From this time the visits of Catherine were frequent. Margaret's despondent state caused her considerable anxiety. She never would come to Tergou ; and indeed would not leave the house. "I held my head too high," she said, "and now I can look no one in the face. The dame Van Eyck tries to forgive me, but she can't : how can she ? None can save me but one, and he comes not ; well-a-day !"

"I tell you," said Catherine, "you are his wife, and my daughter ; and don't ye go fretting now, for the sake of the precious burden you are trusted with." But when it transpired publicly that the clergy were proceeding against Ghysbrecht, Catherine came to Sevenbergen buoyant with the news ; and as she told it with a fair share of exaggeration, it brought life into Margaret's pale face for a moment or two.

One day, as Peter was reading and Margaret leaning her weary head on her new mother's bosom and kissing her hand, and the kind Catherine leaning her head down

with assumed cheerfulness, but secret anxiety, over this her pining daughter, so dear to her now, there stood in the door-way the figure of a man in rags, weary with travel, pale, large eyed. Peter glanced off his book, and said, "Pass on, good man, we are too poor to give," then back to his book again.

There was a swift rush, a staff rattled on the floor, and the worn man was on his knees, with his arms round both the women, speechless and panting for joy.

"Ah! my darling! my darling!" cried his mother, as only a mother can cry; and Margaret clung tight to him with one long moan of love, and sobbed, and laughed, and wept upon his neck.

But words have not the power to paint a joy so sudden, so wild, so all-overpowering.

An hour later Gerard sat between the two, a hand of each in his hand, and ever and anon kissing a cheek of each alternately as he told his story.

"Dear Gerard, 'twas my letter brought you?"

"No, Margaret, I got no letter. 'Twas this brought me, this deed which shows me your father is a wealthy man; his father's goods being wrongfully kept from him by Ghysbrecht Van Swieten; I only found it out at Florence. Was I to go on, and leave you in poverty, when I held this talisman to make you rich?"

"I am rich in your love. I ask no more. Oh, mother, can this be real? can any woman be so happy and live?"

"Why not? what would she gain by dying? Gerard, you and I must talk about that deed; this one is too simple: and now, quick, to Tergou."

"Ay; but how can I leave Margaret so soon?"

"Mother, he loves me still. I'll come too, Gerard, sooner than the rest should want you."

And Margaret was half an hour making the little changes in her clothes and hair, that of late had not kept her five minutes.

And she came down transformed: elastic, and radiant, with beauty.

"Good lack!" cried Catherine, "we shall want no candles with this one in the room!"

And in Buysken's cart went Gerard in rags to Tergou, with a dear hand in each of his, the happiest he in Holland.

Arrived at Tergou, his Spartan sire fell on his neck and kissed him; and no word was uttered but of love and content; and little Kate's face was seraphic, and her hand crept alternately into Margaret's and Gerard's. And as they talked, and sometimes sighed—sometimes rejoiced over all their troubles now happily ended—their glistening eyes and nimble fingers were all busy making Gerard a suit of decent clothes. They hadn't far to go for the cloth, you know.

Next day, when Gerard went to ask the curé to marry him, an objection was raised: "This has been discussed, and it is matter of great doubt whether you are not married: if so, it were a sin to repeat the ceremony. This were to throw doubt upon a sacrament." Gerard exclaimed and entreated, and at last it was settled thus: no fresh bans; the words the curé had uttered not to be repeated; the service to be taken up from the point reached at the last attempt; the marriage to be registered as having taken place at that date, Ghysbrecht's interruption having been laic, profane, illegal, null. On these terms the curé consented to read the rest of the mutilated service—and to take the fees.

The piece of parchment was a covenant by which Ghysbrecht had advanced money, many years ago, to Floris Brandt, on the security of certain lands and houses; Ghysbrecht to draw the rents until said sum should be repaid: but, comparing the income with the debt and date of loan, it was clear it had been repaid this sixteen years. Yet Ghysbrecht had quietly gone on holding the property, without a rag of title; and trusting to the learned Peter's stupidity, had set it afloat that he had *bought* it of Floris Brandt. Thus not only the

property was Peter's, but the back-rents for many years. As for the title-deeds, Gerard rummaged the philosopher's house without much hope. "He has cut them up for labels," said he. Unjust! They were eventually found innocuously lining a drawer, which was full of the seeds of medicinal herbs, and really arranged with considerable method—the seeds. Gerard's father was a shrewd man, and had many friends in Tergou: he and his party took the matter up, and threatened to indict Ghysbrecht if he did not instantly refund; these pressing him hard on one side, and the clergy, whom he had affronted, on the other, Ghysbrecht's ruin and disgrace impended.

But the old fox contrived to give his foes the slip. He was found dead in his bed one morning; not without some suspicion of having hastened an exit desirable for himself and others.

His heir, a distant relative and a just man, deprecated scandal, and accounted to Peter, or rather to Gerard, his son-in-law and man of business, for every farthing due. Gerard and Margaret then removed to Rotterdam, taking with them Peter, who met with more honor in the city than in the village, and had the glory of curing several personages, among the rest a heathen belonging to the Duke. He lived to a great age, cherished tenderly by his good son and daughter. He soon ceased to be aware that they were not both his children by blood.

Gerard and Margaret, like many that meet in youth more than their share of trouble, enjoyed more happiness and tranquillity than falls to the usual lot of man.

The Duke on the report of his giant sent flaming messengers for Giles to come to court. Vain was all remonstrance. The Duke's word was law. Catherine made Giles ready, weeping bitterly. It was an irreparable loss. She could have spared Sybrandt or Cornelis. She had two black sheep. But she had but one dwarf.

Giles was petted and bedizened, and invested with

privileges. Item—on account of his small size he was permitted to speak the truth. It sounded *so* odd at court. It is a disagreeable thing at best; but he contrived to make it more so by bellowing it.

Sybrandt achieved a broken neck without help of halter, I forget how. Cornelis, free from all rivals, and forgiven long ago by his mother; who clung to him more and more now all her brood was scattered, waited, and waited, and waited, for his parents' decease. But his mother's shrewd word came true: ere she and her mate wore out, this worthy rusted away. At sixty-five he lay dying of old age in his mother's arms, a hale woman of eighty-six. He had lain unconscious awhile; but came to himself in articulo mortis, and seeing her near him, told her how he would transmogrify the shop and premises as soon as they should be his. "Yes, my darling," said the poor old woman, soothingly; and in another minute he was clay. And that clay was followed to the grave by all the shoes he had waited for.

After his death the old couple were lonely. Gerard guessed as much, and came for them, and made them sell their shop and goods, and live under his wing, as he had once under theirs. His house was large, his heart was larger. He set them by his chimney-corner, and he and his good Margaret forced comforts on them they would by force of habit have denied themselves. They sat some years by Gerard's hearth, and fondled little heads, and smiled at one another, and spoke of early days, and grew like one another; and their wrinkled faces had still a beauty, for they shone with benignity. Oh, happy end of lives well spent! All the passions gone, all the affections left. Good citizens these, and good spouses. They reared many children in probity and piety, and never did holy wedlock show holier nor more lovely than in this aged happy pair, whose solace it had been for threescore years and ten.

Long and long before this little Kate had left her

trouble behind her. There was too much angel in her face for a long abode on earth. She smiled too in pain, another sign. Life gave her but few joys, so it was just that death should come to her without his frown: and thus he came. She was seized with a sudden lassitude, and a cessation of that pain which had been her companion from infancy. Her mother tried to think this was a change for the better. But the gossips looked at her face and shook their heads, and said, "She is half-way to the saints." Thus painless she lay two days, foretasting heaven. When she was near her end she asked for Gerard's little boy; he was three years old. They brought him and set him on the bed; by this time she was past speaking: but she pointed to a drawer: they looked, and found the two gold pieces Gerard had given her years ago. Then she nodded her head toward the boy, and looked anxious lest they should not understand her. But they did, and put the tokens of the father's love, so faithfully guarded, into the boy's hands: and when she saw his little fingers close on them, she smiled content; and so, having disposed of her little earthly treasures, she yielded her immortal jewel to God, and passed from earth so calmly, none saw her go. Gerard begged to have her crutches, that she had changed so well for angel's pinions; and he set them in his oratory in form of a cross, for he said, "They were my darling sister's crutches, but now they are the relics of a saint." He never forgot her, nor did his memory of her ever wax dim: when he was quite an old man he still spoke of her, with tears in his eyes, as of the one mortal creature he had known, pure from all earthly dross.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF A

THIEF.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A THIEF.

THE readers of "It is never too late to mend" may remember that the chaplain set the thief to write his life honestly. He was not to whitewash, and then gild himself, nor yet to vent one long, self-deceiving howl of general, and therefore sham penitence, but he was to be, with God's help, his own historian and sober critic. Accordingly, Thomas Robinson wrote this autobiography in — jail; and my readers may have noticed that at first I intended to print it with the novel.

It cost me a struggle to resign this intention, for it was the central gem of my little coronet. But the novel, without the autobiography, was five ordinary volumes by printers' calculation, and a story within a story is a frightful flaw in art.

Moreover, I was attacking settled, long-standing prejudices. Prejudice is a giant, against whom Truth and Humanity need to be defended with great spirit, and, in some desperate cases, with a tiger-like ferocity: "*A dur âne dur aiguillon*;" but there must be some judgment too; and, take my word for it, there always has been *some* judgment used, wherever so hard a battle is won. I feared then to multiply paradoxes, and to draw once too often on the faith of the public, as well as on its good heart, I, who carried no personal weight with me.

But I think my readers are now ripe for this strange but true story, and I dedicate it in particular to such as will deign to accept this clew to my method in writing.

I feign probabilities; I record improbabilities: the former are conjectures, the latter truths; mixed, they

make a thing not so true as Gospel nor so false as History, viz., Fiction.

When I startle you most, think twice before you disbelieve me. What able deceiver aims at shocking credulity? Distrust rather my oily probabilities. They should be true, too, if I could make them; but I can't; they are guesses.

You have seen Thomas Robinson, alias Hic, alias Ille, alias Iste, tinted in water-colors by me; now see him painted in oils by himself, and retouched by Mr. Eden.

A thief is a man, and a man's life is like those geographical fragments children learn "the contagious countries" by. The pieces are a puzzle; but, put them together carefully, and, lo! they are a map.

The thief then mapped his puzzle, and I think his work will stand.

These caged autobiographers have a great advantage as writers over other autobiographers that sing false notes of egotism in London squares and American villas built ære alieno.

Carceravis has been publicly convicted. Mavis and Philomele have not met with so much justice. They could eclipse the novelist and the historian, but they don't even rival them. An alternative lies before them: to chronicle themselves and their acts, and so add great instructive pictures of man to the immortal part of literature, or to idealize, as our pedants call it, to slur, falsify, color themselves up here, and tone themselves down there. Unfortunately for letters, they invariably choose the liedal; and instead of coming out bright as stars, the interesting, curious, instructive, valuable rogues, humbugs, and courtesans they are, and so being the darlings of posterity, they go mincing to trunkerity, tame, negative, insipid, characterless creatures, not good enough for an example, not bad enough for a warning, but excellent lining for a bandbox.

No. It is to the detected part of the community we

must look for an honest autobiography. Not that self-deception ever retires wholly from a human heart, but that in these there is no good opinion of the world to back their self-deception. It is not so with many an unconvicted rogue, who is far below an average felon: the banker, who steals not from strangers, but friends—steals from those who have a claim to his gratitude as well as his honesty; the rector, who preaches Christ, and swindles the young curate out of every halfpenny contrary to law, because the poor boy must get a title though he buy it and begin life with debt; how will he end it? The anonymous assassin, the cowardly caitiff of a scribbler, who, with no temptation but mere envy, stabs the great in the dark and truckles to them face to face. A felon is a man, and often a resolute one; but what is this thing that stabs and runs away into a hole? the shopkeeping assassin, who puts red-lead (a deadly poison) into red pepper, and sells death to those by whom he lives.

The shopkeeping assassin, who puts copper, a deadly and cumulative poison, into pickles and preserves, and poisons those by whom he lives. The English assassin, who poisons the young children wholesale in their sugar-plums, and then reads with virtuous indignation of the Sepoys who bayoneted them in their rage instead of killing them cannily.

The miller, abandoned of God, and awaiting here on earth his eternal damnation, who, king of all these Borgia's, thief and murderer at once, poisons young and old at life's fountain, breaks life's very staff, mixes plaster of Paris with the flour that is the food of all men—the only food, alas! of more than half the world.

These and a score more respectables are the hopeless cases. A cracksman or a swell mobsman is terribly hard to cure; but these are incurable. The world's good opinion fortifies their delusion. They open their eyes for the first time in hell. A pickpocket now and then opens them in jail.

We owe to — jail this slippery one who paints himself a slipperyish one, and does not falsify as well as filch.

It is important to observe that this is the man's history not after the events recorded in the novel, but before. His foundation, not his roof. On this autobiographer the benign influences of religion, the solidifying effect of property, and the guardianship of a shrewd but honest wife, have since been bestowed by heaven.

Add then this autobiography to his character as drawn by me in the novel, and you possess the whole portrait; and now it will be for you to judge whether for once we have taken a character that exists on a large scale in Nature, and added it to Fiction, or, here too, have printed a shadow, and called it a man.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

I DID nothing that I particularly remember until I was fifteen, except learn my lessons, with now and then a fight. I lived with my mother in Edinburgh. One day a person of gentlemanly appearance met a band of us as we were going to school, and inquired for me by name. He took me aside into a tavern, and, after treating me, revealed himself to me as my father. He also gave me a crown, and promised to see me again; but was unfortunately prevented, or perhaps forgot.

My education being now considered complete, I went to receive lessons in anatomy, at which I remained for the space of nine months.

I now formed an acquaintance with a young lady. (At this time I was staying with my godfather upon my mother's decease.) But she was unfortunately a Romanist, and on this account my godfather ordered me to leave off her acquaintance, which I refusing, he ordered me out of the house. I complied with his harsh mandate, but first collecting (A.) all the money I could find, which amounted to about £50, and with this I went to Dun-

fermline, and from there to the Rumbling Brigg, where I lodged with a couple well to do. I paid my board while my money lasted; but being now empty, and my host finding I was a scholar, I agreed to give him three lessons a day upon the sly, for which he privately contracted to give me secretly the money to pay his wife my board.

This lasted three months; but one evening as we were at our studies, and having neglected to lock the door, being become too bold by past impunity, the wife, who had discovered our retreat, having listened a moment or two, burst suddenly in upon us, and falling (B.) on her knees, exclaimed,

“Good heavens, am I married to a man who does not know that three times five make fifteen?” and burst into a flood of tears and reproaches.

This was the line of the table he was unfortunately repeating to me at the time.

His wife’s conduct raising a counter-excitement in my pupil, and finding I had lighted a flame which would not easily be extinguished, I thought proper to retire and go back to Dunfermline. Here I learned my first trade of the many I have practiced.

I engaged myself to a master weaver and petty manufacturer. Besides learning to take drafts of patterns, etc., I used to cast his accounts. But one day he sent me to the bank to draw some money: on this I absconded with the money, and went to Edinburgh.

He pursued me so closely that, with the aid of the police, he apprehended me before I had time to spend it. To avoid punishment, I gave him back the money all but seventeen shillings, and he, who was a good-natured man, wished me to go back to my place; but, having borne a good name in the place until then, I thought shame to go back; so I went to Newcastle after borrowing of my (C.) late master 15s. for the journey.

At Newcastle I went into a chemist’s shop for some

cough-lozenges. Now it happened that a woman in the shop asked for some medicine. I forget just now what it was, but the shop-boy took down the wrong; he took down a bottle containing chamomile, I remember that; so I told the boy that he mistook the Latin term. This naturally attracted the master's attention, and he looked up and saw I was correct; so then he asked me several questions, and finding me fit for his purpose, he took me into his service, and here for a long while all my sorrows were at an end, for I took a delight in studying my master's interests, and laying up knowledge.

He favored me with his instructions, and I enjoyed at times the company of his daughter, which was to me a comfort above all, and with whom I felt myself soon deep in love, and with her I spent many a happy hour after the business of the day was over, walking out in the evenings, while the moon with her bright and gentle rays gave to all things a delightful appearance, and seemed to lift up our minds to something above the groveling cares of Time—or we heard the plaintive notes of the nightingale breaking the silence of the night, and calling us to join him in his songs of praise to the God of Nature. But sweeter still than the voice of the nightingale was the voice of my companion, which was sweetest of all when its topic (D.) would run to that portion which forms the golden part of Cupid's dart.

In these innocent joys I spent four years.

But one unfortunate evening, having a drop too much at the time, I met Miss B. as usual, and opportunity and temptation unfortunately occurring, I was guilty of a felony that has always remained on my conscience more than any of those acts I have been guilty of, which the law describes to be the highest crimes.

From that night our walks beneath the moon by the river side were no longer innocent, and we were no longer happy.

Oh (E.) cursed night and place that robbed a virgin

of her purity! and oh cursed Tyne, why did not thou overflow thy banks and drive me away? If now thy fountain-spring was to pour out streams of flaming lava, it would not purge the disgrace out of thy dark banks—nay, if thy banks themselves were to become gold, they would not ransom the character lost on that night, nor restore the rest and quiet that now fled from my pillow.

Four months had scarce elapsed before I learned that consequences of a serious kind were to be expected.

I was in great perplexity. At last, taking a desperate course, I with much hesitation asked my master for his daughter's hand.

My master, who, though a good-natured, was a hasty man, turned black and red at the idea, but recovering himself soon, he turned it off as a jest. I saw by this that he would never consent, and, dreading discovery, I got a friend of mine to write to me (F.) from Edinburgh that my sister lay at the point of death, and begged to see me.

Showing this letter to my master, I got leave of absence and a present for the journey, with which I started, promising to return in a week, but with no such intention.

I arrived at Edinburgh, and found my sister, whom I had spoken of as dying, just on the eve of marriage. I was at the wedding, but the nuptial feast was no feast to me, for it only recalled the thoughts of my own guilt.

I now began the world again.

I went to Stirling and obtained a situation with a baker; but the work was much too hard for me, so I left him in two days, and took (A.) with me three pound ten shillings; was apprehended in Glasgow, and got sixty days.

On receiving my liberty I enlisted in her majesty's service, and was marched on board the "Pique" frigate bound for the West Indies.

Here I remained until we got to Plymouth, where I made my escape, but was retaken in the town, and brought back to the ship and put in irons on the spar-deck under cover of a tarpaulin: this was my prison till we reached St. Vincent. We anchored here for two days, and in the confusion of getting under-weigh again I watched my opportunity, and having broken my padlock the day before, I stole into the captain's cabin, he being on deck, and took away a suit of his clothes, and dropped into the water; and the weather being calm, and I being an excellent swimmer, I swam alongside a brigantine that lay at anchor in the bay, and hailing her from the surface of the water, sang out, "Halloo! are you short of hands?"

"We are," was the reply; "where do you hail from?"

"What has that to do with it?" said I. So they hauled me on board.

The master, finding I had been educated, sent me on shore to his brother who kept a store; and so now I was his shopman.

I lived with my new master: we used to come to the shop in the morning, and go home at night. We lived a mile and a half out of the town in a pretty Gothic house, which stood in the middle of a delightful garden bordered by sugar-canes. In front of the house was an avenue of orange and lemon trees mixed; their branches bent with the exuberance of the fruit; and the ground glittered with great shaddocks and limes, that lay like lumps of gold, unheeded and rotting for abundance. The air, too, was filled with the scent of thousands of rich flowers that were scattered about, some by Nature, some by the hand of man; in short, it was an earthly paradise, in which I might have ended my days if the demon of change had not filled my mind with the desire to behold once more my native country. Stupid fool!

I set sail, and after a stormy passage reached the port of London.

I lodged in the Commercial Road till my money was nearly gone, and then I became disconsolate.

Wandering one day in the Ratcliffe Highway, it was my luck to fall in with an old acquaintance, whom I had known through being-in trouble together. He introduced me to a lodging-house-keeper in the neighborhood, who, after a few words with my companion, told me "it was all right; we should find means of settling."

I went to bed, and when I wanted to get up my clothes were stolen, with the few shillings I had left. Remonstrating with the landlord, he said, "Oh, it is a mistake," and disappearing for a few minutes, during which I heard high words and a bit of a tussle, he returned with my clothes and money.

The next day, seeing me very dull, and concluding by that I was ripe for business, he inquired the cause of my uneasiness.

I told him my last shilling was melting.

He laughed at this cause of trouble.

"You don't know," said he, "you are in the Mint."

"In the Mint?" said I.

"Yes," was his reply; "in the Mint, my boy;" and with that he took up a chisel and went to the chimney, and carefully removed a loose brick, and took out of the gap a tin box. He opened the box, and coins of every sort in profusion flashed upon my bewildered eyes; and not only coins, but dies and metal of all sorts for making them.

"Now," said Cræsus, "having gone so far, you must take the oath at once."

Four men and four females were then summoned, and, standing in the middle of them, I took a solemn oath to this effect:

"I hereby swear never to tell any one how to make 'shoffle,' nor where I learned it, nor yet to use any kind of language that may lead to the same, upon pain of death."

Here followed imprecations upon my eyes and limbs, if broken, such as are used among freemasons, etc., but not being fit for your reverence's ears, I suppress that part.

The next process was to go and change a base sovereign, which I did accordingly, returning with nineteen and sixpence, and of which sixpence went for the gin.

Behold me now a shoffle-pitcher. But it was never my way to remain at the bottom of any business that I found worth studying. I therefore, in the course of six months, learned to coin first a shilling, then a sovereign, then the most difficult of all, a crown; and last of all, to make the moulds for each of these coins; and as soon as I found I could make a mould for a crown, I dissolved partnership, and went to Gravesend on my own bottom.

Your reverence will blame me less for this revolt if I tell you the terms on which we worked with him whom I have called Cræsus, and his name did begin with a C.

He had the half of every coin we uttered; he had the cost of the metal besides, and the half of every article purchased in the process of uttering.

Now this was not fair; at least I think not, because he did not share the risk.

I pitched on my own account about a month; then finding the trade stale, and having once or twice narrowly missed being apprehended, I returned to London and betook myself to the diligent study of house-breaking. I learned from a master how to make false keys; and having money by me, and courting the company of the best cracksmen, and listening to all they said with respect and attention, I attracted notice, and was made a member of the body, and soon after permitted to take part in a job. It was a doctor's shop in the Commercial Road, and my share came to £50. And this was only the first of many transactions of the kind.

And as it becomes every one that is in a business to master it if possible, I will tell your reverence how I attended to mine, trusting you will not make it generally

public, as it is not considered honorable among us to reveal the secrets of business, but only on account of your goodness I am willing to put you on your guard, and also your own friends—that is to say, such of them as have got any thing to lose; but hope it will go no farther than the jail.

Now, as the chief work of practitioners in our line is to find out where the money or valuables are kept, this was my plan:

If it was a shop, I should go in and buy something, give the shopman a sovereign and notice where he put it, and from whence he took the change, and at the same time how the door was fastened, whether with a lock or bar, or while my pal (for we always went in pairs) was engaging the shopman, I would take the dimensions of the same.

Or, if it was a dwelling-house, I would go and present the mistress with a card stating I was a china or glass mender, a French polisher, a teacher of music or dancing, and try every move to get admittance into the parlor, and then you may be sure my eyes were not shut.

Or else I would go and offer the servant some article for sale as a hawker, and would chaff and flatter her, and so perhaps get a notion where the plate was kept, and the next week come and fetch it away.

In the course of a few weeks I had collected somewhere about one hundred pounds in money and valuables, and finding the police had scent of me, I left London and went down by the Leith smack to Edinburgh.

Here I visited my friends, and passed myself off in their society for a thriving tradesman.

I also sent some money to Miss B.—not that money could repay the injury I had done her, but still it would make her friends more civil to see that she wanted for nothing.

If my real character had not got wind in Newcastle, I think at this time they would have let me marry her, and

I think, bad as I am, I should have mended for her sake, for she was the only woman I ever really loved. (G.)

It is an old saying, that "the money which comes by the wind goes by the water."

I have made thousands, but never could keep so much as a £5 note.

In about a month nearly all my money was melted, and I set out on a cruise again.

Falling into some of my old haunts in Yorkshire I met with a friend who manufactured base coin, and, having passed a quantity of this and being now at my ease, I determined to study a new profession.

I therefore secluded myself from all my idle companions, took a quiet lodging, bought several medical books, and studied the human frame and the disorders to which it is subject.

I studied night and day with the same diligence I had given to coining, house-breaking, and my other professions.

In about a month I considered myself fit to start, which I accordingly did with as much pomp as I could command, having seen how far that goes toward success in the learned professions.

I engaged a servant with a handsome livery to deliver my bills at the most respectable doors, and attend upon me when I addressed the public.

I had a thousand bills printed representing myself as Dr. Scott from Edinburgh, and I furnished myself with testimonials from respectable parties—I mean that would have been, but who, in point of fact, had no existence—and printed them at the foot of my bills.

My plan was, on entering a town, first to go for the more respectable customers by putting up at a good inn, making friends with the landlord, and sending my footman round with my bills; but before leaving I used to appear in my true colors as an itinerant quack.

In this capacity I used to harangue the people and sell my drugs.

In my public discourses I always ran down the regular practitioner, as we are all obliged to do, and the plan I used to follow was cool irony: I found this went farther than pretending to get into a heat.

Unlike most quacks, I did not apply one or two remedies to every disorder, and I met with wonderful success, especially with the women; partly, I think, because with them imagination goes far, and my patter inspired them with more confidence than the regular doctors could, not having the gift of the gab.

While traveling as a doctor I never would accept money from any of my patients until the disease, whatever it might be, took a turn for the better; and even then my charges were always low; but, to make up, I did pass a deal of base coin wherever I traveled.

The following were some of my most remarkable cures:

The landlady of a public house at York of a dysentery.

At Wakefield I reduced an imposthume which the proprietor was going to have cut if it had not been for me.

At Hull I actually cured a respectable woman of a cataract, and was praised in the public journals.

These and a hundred ordinary cures are the benefits I rendered the public in return for the many wrongs I have done it.

I had been practicing pharmacy some three months when one day I received a letter from Newcastle.

It was from Miss B.'s uncle, telling me I might visit her now.

The letter was very short, and there was something about it I did not understand; so that, instead of filling me with delight, as such a letter would a while ago, I set out for Newcastle flush of cash but full of perplexity.

I reached Newcastle, and, lest her friends should have changed their mind again, and receive me with an affront, I went to an ale-house convenient to her residence, and sent for her younger brother, who had never been so much against me as the others.

He came directly, and I began to put a dozen questions to him; but he maintained silence; he hung his head and said, "Don't ask me—you will soon know—and since you are here, come without loss of time;" and he led the way in gloomy silence.

I was taken into the house, and after some little delay was allowed to go up into her room: I shall never forget it.

Her cheeks, that used to be like two roses, were now pale and ghastly, and her beaming eyes were dull and sunk in her head; only her voice and her smile were as sweet as ever.

Her first word was, "I have only waited for this." Then she stretched out her hand, and thanked me in a sweet and composed tone of voice "for coming to perform the last part of a husband's duty;" but here her feelings overcame her, and the poor thing burst into a flood of tears, and I fell on my knees, and sobbed and cried with her; and her relations somehow felt that they were not to come between us any more now, and they looked at one another and left the room without any noise, and we were alone a little while.

And then I kneeled down again and prayed her to forgive the injury I had done her person and character; and then she answered like a woman that she was to blame and not I; and this answer from her, and she dying, went through me like a knife, and I prayed to die for her, or at least die with her; and bursting into unmanly and useless grief, and groveling in anguish and remorse upon the floor, some of them came in and interfered for her sake, and very properly led me away—and not in an unkind manner, for which may God bless them any way.

I hope your reverence may never feel as I did: I had no acute sense of grief or pain—bodily or mental pain would have been a relief—I felt dead—my body seemed dead, my heart seemed dead.

I crawled to my inn, and crawled into bed, and lay sleepless but motionless till daybreak. Then I rose and went down to the river-side, and walked up and down, and at about nine, when I thought the family would be up, I went to the house.

The moment I came in sight of the house I saw all the shutters were up. But it gave me scarcely any shock, for I was stone, and I seemed to know before this that all was over.

They wished me to see her, but I was unable then; but the day before she was buried I took a last look at her: it did not seem to be her, but only some shell or frame she had once inhabited—now a ruinous heap of corruption; and that is an awful word.

Is it a castle? there was a time when the heart of the bold soldier burned with ardor to defend it.

Is it a senate? there was a time when the loud applause of eloquence thundered from its roof—

Or is it a temple? there was a time when the white-stoled priest called down the fire from heaven to bless the sacrifice.

But here is a temple, one not made with hands, the architecture of which is too sublime for our minds to conceive, a temple that was erected to be the seat of its Maker, one in which dwelt not only the image, but the spirit of its Creator: let me ask, then, why was it thus left desolate, and whither has its tenant gone?

Tell me, ye seas, whose waves roll and ripple at our feet or thunder on our vessels, tell me, have ye seen the airy stranger float along your surface, and whither has it winged its way?

Tell me, ye winds, harpers of the mountain forest; methinks ye could, for there are times ye whisper gently, and seem as if ye were holding communion with departed spirits; tell me, have ye seen this airy stranger, and whither has she gone? Tell me, ye dazzling worlds, that perform your regular but mystic dance upon the airy

surface; tell me, have ye seen this airy stranger wing her way through your aerial canopy, and whither has it gone?

Such thoughts as these followed the first anguish at losing her, and to all these inquiries one answer seemed to come back to me from all Creation—

“The body returns to the dust, and the soul to God who gave it.”

And when I compared this answer with my own conduct, I felt I was far behind; and over my sweetheart's grave I vowed to amend my life, that one day I might hope to meet her again. The first three days after the funeral I tried in every direction for an honest situation.

The fourth I fell from all my good resolutions.

In my despair I had recourse to drink, and was undone. I was drunk for a whole week, and by the end of that time was penniless.

Let mankind take warning by my fate, and not fancy the habit of drink can be formed with safety. Up to this time, though like all the world I had wasted a large portion of my gains upon drink, yet I had never gone at it like a madman. But what of that? the habit was formed; it was there waiting like a lion for its prey, waiting for a great opportunity, your reverence. One came: I was in despair; my appetite was gone, and drink comforted my stomach; my heart was dead, and drink made it beat. I had recourse to this solace, and became a beast. As I said before, for a whole week I was never not to say sober.

No man and no woman is safe that has once formed the fatal habit of looking to drink for solace, or cheerfulness, or comfort. (H.) While the world goes well they will likely be temperate; but the habit is built, the railroad to destruction is cut ready for use, the trains are laid down, and the station-houses erected, and the train is on the line waiting only for the locomotive. Well, the first great trouble or hopeless grief is the locomotive: it

comes to us, it grapples us, and away we go in a moment down the line we have been years constructing like a flash of lightning to the devil.

I woke one afternoon sober and penniless.

From drunkenness to thieving is not a very wide leap even to those who are beginning an evil career; to me it was no more than crossing a gutter. I pawned my watch, and got on board the steamer for London, and back to my old haunts.

I soon fell in with an old pal, and borrowed £10 of him, and began first to pass and after that to coin "shoffle;" and, when that was not quick work enough, took to house-breaking and shop-lifting again.

But in the early part of this chapter of my career, having very little cash, for part of the £10 went for clothes, I was obliged to be moderate in my expenses, and I accordingly spent a week in a lodging-house kept by an old friend of mine, which I will try to describe.

The house itself is divided into two separate compartments besides the bed-chambers.

The first or state apartment is for professional thieves.

The back room is for those street trades that lie between thieving and commerce.

My friend ushered me in here, and there were more than a score of them all gazing with their mouths open at the new-comer—all engaged at various labors, and talking a dozen different branches of cant.

Some were making mats—some arranging articles for sale in their baskets or on their trays—some making matches—the "askers" selling their begged bread at three halfpence the pound—another tuning up his fiddle—the whole lot comparing notes to the detriment of the public—the beggar telling the match-maker at what house they gave him meat or money—the hawker and mat-maker exchanging the same sort of profitable information, by which many an easy-going gentleman, that thinks himself obscure, gets his habits published among

the dregs of society, and perhaps a nickname tacked on to him, and more people knowing him by it than know him by his own.

Then there was the "buzzer" practicing his necromancy. Presently in came a "sneaker" with half a firkin of butter for sale at 4*d.* per pound, on which the women fell to abusing their men because they had not enough money to buy ten or twelve pounds; children crying, and all in a mighty way because the fountain is not boiling.

In the corner was a handsome young female, evidently a stranger, biting the end of her apron-string, her mind not being able to comprehend the fullness of the scene.

"Here is a sweetheart for you and all," said my friend. "She is waiting for her husband to come back," added he, winking to me.

Her husband, as she called the man who had enticed her from her friends, never came back, and, indeed, nobody except herself ever thought he would.

Then, to amuse her mind, I requested her to go an errand for me. She agreed. I gave her a base sovereign, and sent her to buy groceries, which when she had done I invited her to take tea with me, and over our tea she told me her story without reserve.

Finding she was a decent girl, and apparently had never made but this one slip, I determined to enter into partnership with her, if she would consent.

Strange as it may appear, I felt the want of a female companion now in a way I never had until Miss B.'s death. I believe my nerves were shaken by that sad event, and I began to want to see a woman's face opposite me, and to hear the soft notes of a female voice.

Three days after our first meeting we were married according to the custom of the house—*i. e.*, a traveler dressed in a white sheet, with holes cut for his arms, read a few sentences of the marriage service to us; he then drew a line on the floor with a piece of chalk, and made

us leap over it in succession while he recited in a solemn voice the following :

“Leap, rogue ; and follow, jade—
Man and wife for evermore,”

which concluded the ceremony, and we were man and wife in the eyes of all the lodgers, unless we should agree to be untied, which could only be done by the same party or his successor, and with other ceremonies, and, above all—fees ! We soon left this house and set up a lodging of our own. She made me very comfortable when I was at home, and I let her want for nothing.

I lived nearly three years in London this bout, and, owing to the company I kept, I got the cockney phrase and twang so that I fear I will never entirely get rid of them. Indeed, I am commonly taken for a cockney, which is a sad disgrace to a man born north of the Tweed. (I.)

At the end of this time my wife’s friends sent to beg her to come home, which she asked my leave to do. I consented, and we were untied, and parted with mutual expressions of esteem. Finding London rather dull after she was gone, I agreed to join a gang of us that were about to make a provincial trip.

We went to Mortimer, a village in Berkshire. The scene of our business was Reading and its neighborhood. We committed some very daring robberies in Reading and Caversham, that will not soon be forgotten.

We broke into one house in Reading in open day: it was Sunday, and the whole family were gone to church. We rifled the house, and left a paper on the table, on which I am ashamed (J.) to tell your reverence I wrote

“Watch as well as pray !”

But this could not last forever. I had been out fishing all day (a sport I am very fond of), when, returning toward dusk, I saw a strange face at one of the windows of our house.

Not quite understanding this, I turned back and went

a mile round, to where I could see the back of the house without being recognized, and my caution was not wasted.

I soon found that the house was in the possession of the police, and that all or most of my comrades were nabbed.

Having some money about me, I decamped, and, returning to town, found two of my companions about to start for California, dazzled by the accounts we heard of the fortunes made there by digging and levying the roadside tax on those who dug.

I joined them, and after a voyage of six months we landed at San Francisco.

Your reverence has often heard me talk of my adventures in that country, and you have often forbade me to be always thinking and talking about gold; I will, therefore, abstain from relating my adventures in the New World—in fact, they would of themselves fill a volume. Suffice it to say, I had at one time twelve hundred pounds in money and gold-dust, but I wasted the greater part, and by a just retribution was robbed of the rest.

I returned to London with £10 and a nugget, which I sold for £25 in Threadneedle Street.

And now, not liking the smoke of London, after one or two successful jobs, which swelled my stock to a matter of £60, I bought some new clothes and went down to Reading, but, not thinking it prudent to remain there long, crossed the river and went into Oxfordshire.

I heard of a farmer who sometimes took a lodger, and as I was well dressed, and he too honest to be suspicious, we soon came to terms.

The farmer was George Fielding, of whom your reverence has often heard me speak.

I never met with such a character as his: he did not seem to know any thing about lying, far less taking any thing without paying for it.

When I first lodged with him I had, of course, an eye

to business, but I got so fond of him (K.) I could not take any thing of his; and he was attached to me too, until one unlucky day he found out my real character, and then he insulted me, and now he despises me.

I spent four innocent months here, and I often thought, if I could have such an honest man as George Fielding always close to my side all day, I could keep from taking any thing all the rest of my life; but, unluckily, my money gradually melted, in which state I went to a fair in the neighborhood. I saw a rich farmer take out some notes and make a payment, and put the rest back into a side-pocket: almost before it reached the bottom of his pocket it was mine.

The country banks close at three o'clock, and it was near four at the time; I got rid, therefore, of the Bank of England notes, meaning to change the others when a good opportunity should occur.

But meantime I suppose measures were taken against me; any way, the police came down from London, and I was seized, identified, and put to an open shame.

This, the last passage of my life, went nearer to drive me to despair than all the rest; for I had begun to taste the sweets of innocence, and to love honesty under the name of George Fielding.

I was convicted at the Assizes, and being recognized as having been seven times in prison, and notoriously guilty of many felonies besides, they sentenced me to twelve months' imprisonment, and transportation for ten years.

I have been six months in this jail, where I have met with most cruel treatment, being forced to labor beyond my strength even when weakened by sickness, and punished for mere inability; and, besides the harm this wrought my body, it hardened my heart, and made me look on mankind as my enemy.

But, after that, your reverence was sent here by Heaven to our relief.

It was my good fortune to find in you a gentleman whose heart was large enough to feel for all who suffer, and whose understanding could comprehend that a convict is a man, and this has been a godsend to me, and may the Almighty bless you for all your goodness, and above all for your constant battle to save us poor fellows' souls, and, when you stand one day at the great tribunal, may many a black sheep stand round you that the world perhaps took for goats to the last!

Well, sir, when I look back upon my past life, of which what I have written here is no more than a single page out of volumes and volumes—when I think of the many opportunities I have had of doing good to myself and others, and then think of how it all ends—a convicted felon, doomed to pass the remainder of my life in shame and exile, debarred from situations where I could execute my talents, and felon printed upon me, I am whiles tempted to put the gas-pipe that is in my cell into my mouth, and suck the poisonous vapor into my lungs, and thus with crime to end a life of crime. But then your face rises up before me, and expostulates with a look, and bids me be patient and hope; also your words, that I ought to be thankful to God for his mercy in giving me time to reflect on the enormity of my crimes, and not cutting me down as a cumberer of the ground.

But, above all, I feel it would be ungrateful to you and grieve you if I was to make away with myself under your eye, or even to despair.

I will try my best to be somebody yet, if only for your reverence's sake; for it is a shame a gentleman like you should give his days and his nights, and all the blood in his heart, to saving us poor fellows from perdition, and be continually disappointed.

So once more thanking your reverence for all kindness, and for setting me to write this, which has amused and whiled away some weary hours, and begging you to excuse all faults and blunders, for in my busy life writing

is an art I have had no time to give my mind to, I close this record of the disgraceful past, and here in my cell, envying the cripple round whom the free air plays and on whom the sun shines, I await the gloomy future.

Thomas *

—*alias* Wilkinson,
—*alias* Lyon,
—*alias* M'Pherson,
—*alias* Scott,
—*alias* Howard,
—*alias* Robinson.

A. "Collected" and "took with me." No such thing. "Stole" is the word that represents the transactions. Always be precise. Never tamper with words: call a spade a spade, and a picklock a picklock; that is the first step toward digging instead of thieving.

B. She did not fall on her knees. You put that in for stage effect, and it produces none, the gesture is so manifestly inappropriate.

C. And he lent it you. Pause a moment, and look at yourself by the side of this honest (irascible?) and magnanimous honest man, whose hand a single paragraph of yours made me long to grasp in mine.

D. "When its topic would run to that portion which forms the golden part of Cupid's dart." This sentence is rank nonsense. No more of this, or I shall fear I have warmed a poetaster.

E. "Oh, cursed night and place, that robbed a virgin of her purity;" "and oh, cursed Tyne," that did not turn policeman; and oh, blessed Robinson, that was alone to blame. Why, what bombast is this? Always put the

saddle on the right horse, and don't be so fond of cursing: believe me, it is a bad habit. You cursed Mr. Hawes, who needed all our prayers—you cursed him in earnest; and now you are off at a tangent, evading those just expressions of serious self-reproach proper to the situation, and cursing in jest the coaly Tyne, benefactor of a province, and the night, a blessing wide as the world. Bless, and curse not!

F. The turning point of your life. Had you staid at Newcastle and faced it out like a man, there would have been a storm, I grant you: the old chemist would have raved; but Nature is strong; for his daughter's sake he would have ended by marrying you to her, and you would be master of the shop now—an honest citizen of Newcastle; but, though you had given up theft, you had not forgotten how to lie.

Observe! this is a new starting-point; all the rest of your life will be a consequence of that single falsehood; so now we shall see whether the Bible is wrong in its hatred and terror of a lie.

G. You did not love her. Don't flatter yourself. If a thief loved a woman, he would steal her; if a five-pound note had been as easy to filch from the old chemist as this poor girl, I know who would have taken it, collected it, removed it, abstracted it, and changed its relative situation. You never loved her; but I fear she loved you.

H. Real wisdom and observation in this remark.

I. Why is a twang worse than a brogue? and why should it disgrace the native of a small nation to be taken for the native of a great nation? Is a sucker nobler than its tree?

J. "Ashamed?" The little humbug could not resist showing me his wit, of which he says he is ashamed.

K. That I can readily believe of you, and it is by your affections we must try and save you, with God's help.

I sum up your career as Dr. Johnson did the "Beggars' Opera."

"Here is a labefaction of all principle:

Many good impulses—dug in sand.

Many good feelings—unstable as water.

Many good resolves—written in air.

But not the thousandth part of a grain of principle."

But how human your sad story is in every part; yet there are people who will dream that you and your fellows are monsters, and prescribe monstrous remedies for your souls.

I thank you for the general candor of your narrative; it renders my task a little easier.

I have many things to say to you seriously and sadly about points in this story; above all, I must show you that you are not innocent of poor Miss B.'s death, whose unhappy fate has made me very sad. My poor fellow, you have not yet comprehended how much this poor girl loved you, nor the variety of tortures she was enduring all the while you were jaunting it at your ease all over the world. These killed her. I will make you see this, and repent far more deeply than you have done. Half the cruelty in the world comes by want of intelligence.

I must compliment you on your literary powers: this is really an astonishing composition for a complete novice. I observe that toward the close of it, short as it is, you have already become a better writer than you were at starting—your style more disengaged, fewer Sir Ab-lative Absolutes, polysyllables, involved sentences, and less ungrammatical eloquence.

If it will give you any pleasure to hear it, know that in a pretty large experience of scholars, artists, lawyers, and men of business, I never encountered a man with

livelier and more versatile powers than yourself. You ought to be leading the House of Commons; and you are here!

I do not, however, admire most the passages on which you probably pride yourself; for instance, the sublime passage beginning "Is it a castle?"

Here rhetoric intruded unseasonably upon feeling. The plain narrative of your poor sweetheart's death-bed; of her telling you, woman-like, that she was more to blame for being tempted than you for tempting her; her death and your remorse, moistened my eyes as I read, but your sublime reflections dried them on the spot.

Your eloquence reminded me that you are a humbug, and never really loved this poor girl: all the worse for you.

You felt and feel remorse, and shall feel more, but you never loved Miss B.; do not flatter yourself.

It is hardly fair to dissect the sublime; still permit me, with due timidity and respect, to suggest that you have taken similitudes and called them distinctions—contrasted where you should have compared. A mouldering castle, a mute senate-house, and a ruined temple are not unlike, but like, an inanimate body.

What says the poet writing of a skull?

"Can all that saint, sage, sophist, ever writ,
People this lonely hall, this tenement refit?"

In matters literary begin with logic; build on that rhetoric or what ornaments you will.

In matters moral begin with a grain of sense and principle, and on them raise the ingenuity and versatile talents of Mr. Thomas Robinson! Thus you shall not sublimely stumble in letters, nor in conduct be an ingenious, able, versatile, gifted, clever blockhead and fool.

You called the nightingale "him."

This shocks an innocent prejudice.

In science, it is to be feared, there are cock nightin-

gales. But you were favoring us with a poetic touch, and in poetry nightingales are all hens.

Remind me some day to tell you the story of Philomele.

Your closing sentences are sad, and would make me as sad or sadder if I saw your real mind in them; but this is only a temporary despondency, the effect of separate confinement, which is beginning to tell on you, spite of all we can do.

I shall get your sentence shortened, and you will soon cross the water; so you see there is nothing to despond about. Your prospects were never so bright. You are now master of one craft, and well advanced in others; you are at no man's mercy; your own hands avail to feed, and keep, and clothe you. Be honest, and you will always be well off. Consecrate your talents to God's service, and you will most likely be happy even in this world. And for the short time you have to remain in confinement, we will find you all the occupation and amusement the law permits; and if you ever feel greatly depressed, ring that moment for Evans or me, and we will chase the foul fiend away.

So cheer up, and don't fancy you are alone, when by putting out your hand you can bring an honest fellow to your side who pities you, and me who love you.

F. E.

PRISON THOUGHTS.

Caged in a prison cell, how sad, yet true,
Does the lone heart bring former scenes to view,
Till the racked mind with bitter phrensy driven,
Maligns the just decrees of man and heaven.
The grated bars, and iron-studded door,
The cold bare walls, and chilly pavement floor,
The hammock, table, stool, and pious book,
The jailer's stealthy tread and jealous look,
Force back the maddened thoughts to other days,
When joyous youth was crowned with hopeful bays;
E'er rank luxuriant folly reigned supreme,
As if this life was nothing but a dream,
Or the dire cup had seared the unblighted heart,
And caused all holy feelings to depart—
E'er each sweet hour, so innocently gay,
Passed like a mellow summer's eve away.
Cursed be the hour when first I turned astray
From keeping sacred God's own hallowed day—
When first I learned to sip the poisoned bowl,
That kills the body and corrupts the soul.
'Twas then my godly lessons, one by one,
Fled from my giddy heart till all were gone,
And left behind a waste and dreary wild,
A conscience hardened, and a soul defiled.
Oh! when I think on what I've been, and see
My present state, and think what I may be,
Despair and horror burns and boils within
For years of folly and continued sin,
Until my brain seems bursting with the dread
Of Heaven's just judgments falling on my head.
No baneful passions fired my tranquil mind,
No wild, unruly thoughts ranged unconfined,
But all was fair, and gladsome as the grove,
Where warbling songsters live in artless love.
How changed my lot! No sister, mother, sire,
Now fondly sit around the wintry fire;
No household song beguiles the lengthened night,
No homely jest creates a fond delight,

FAC SIMILE OF THOMAS ROBINSON'S HAND-WRITING.

Prison - Thoughts.

Paged in a prison cell, how ~~dead~~ ^{dead} yet true,
Yet the lone heart, long former scenes to view,

Will the racked mind, with bitter fondly drawn,

Reliving the just decrees of Man and Heaven;

No Sabbath morning sees us now engage.
 In rapt attention on the holy page,
 Or hears the swelling notes of praise and prayer
 Borne on the breeze, and floating on the air.
 Oh! could my parents' shades but bend on earth,
 They'd mourn like me the morning of my birth.
 Almighty Father! God of Life and Death!
 Give, oh! give *me* a true and living faith.
 Bestow Thy quickening Spirit, and impart
 Thy saving Grace to tranquilize my heart,
 That I may better live for time to come,
 And rear my spirit for Thy heavenly home.

L

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

A Sermon preached in the Chapel of * Jail, on Sunday, 9th January, 1849,
from Matthew 5th and 17th, by the Rev. Francis Eden, and versified

BY ONE OF THE PRISONERS.

'Mid rolling clouds of fearful smoke,
'Mid lightning's flash and thunder's roar,
'Mid loud continued sounds, which shook
The startled earth from shore to shore,
'Mid volumes of devouring flame,
Unseen, yet felt, the Almighty came.

Lo! on Mount Sinai's giddy height
Is reared Jehovah's awful throne,
Pregnant with Heaven's ethereal light,
Too glorious to be gazed upon,
While beams of dazzling brightness bound
The circuit of the hallowed ground.

Hark! as the appalling voice of God
Proclaims the law of Life and Death,
Nature, o'erburdened with the load,
Holds hard her almost fleeting breath,
While sunless heaven and darkened air
Are hung with blackness of despair.

Offspring of Gentile and of Jew,
Descendants of a common stock,
These great eternal laws for you
Were thundered from Mount Sinai's rock;
And ill or good on him shall fall
Who breaks but one, or keeps them all.

But oh! weak man can ne'er obey
Laws with such fearful justice fraught,
For every moment of the day
He sins in word, or deed, or thought.
The Law of Death would thus enslave him,
Did not a pardoning Gospel save him.

From Calvary's hill a stream proceeds,
Whose cleansing merits all may share,
Ay, even although their guilt exceeds
The weight of what the earth can bear.

For Christ's atoning blood can clean
A hell-deserving world from sin.

No lightning's flash, no scowling sky,
No trembling mount of smoke and flame,
No crashing thunder boomed from high
When our Great Mediator came ;
But seraph's sounds announced to earth
Glad tidings of a Savior's birth.

No chosen consecrated priest,
No heaps of slain or seas of blood,
Nor solemn fast, nor stated feast,
Can now appease a jealous God,
Or open up a fount of grace
To Adam's unregenerate race.

An humble heart, a lowly mind,
A contrite and believing soul,
Where Truth and Mercy are enshrined
Beyond a sinful world's control,
Is all the God of heaven will claim
From those who own Immanuel's name.

How goodly are the steps of those
Who walk in humbleness of heart,
And with well-grounded hopes have chose
The Gospel's sure and better part.
To such the law of works is dead,
Through faith in Christ, their living head.

But as Jehovah's dread decree
Does with a Savior's love unite,
So let our faith and works agree,
In one continued bond of light ;
For faith and works, if used alone,
Can ne'er for guilty deeds atone.

Then fly, ye sinners, to the Cross,
There let your eager hopes be bound,
Count all things else but dung and dross
To win Christ, and in him be found ;
So shall your Christian race be bless'd
With Heaven's prepared eternal rest.

* *Jail, 3d Feby., 1849.*

Prisoner's name—THOMAS ROBINSON.

JACK OF ALL TRADES.

A Matter-of-Fact Romance.

JACK OF ALL TRADES.

A Matter-of-fact Romance.

THERE are nobs in the world, and there are snobs.

I regret to say I belong to the latter department.

There are men that roll through life, like a fire new red ball going across Mr. Lord's cricket-ground on a sunshiny day; there is another sort that have to rough it in general, and, above all, to fight tooth and nail for the quartern-loaf, and not always win the battle. I am one of this lot.

One comfort, folk are beginning to take an interest in us. I see nobs of the first water looking with a fatherly eye into our affairs—our leaden taxes and feather incomes; our fifteen per cent. on undeniable security when the rich pay but three and a half; our privations and vexations; our dirt and distresses; and one day a literary gent, that knows my horrible story, assured me that my ups and downs would entertain the nobility, gentry, and commonalty of these realms.

"Instead of grumbling to me," says he, "print your troubles, and I promise you all the world will read them, and laugh at them."

"No doubt, sir," said I, rather ironical; "all the world is at leisure for that."

"Why, look at the signs of the times," says he; "can't you see workmen are up? so take us while we are in the humor, and that is now. We shall not always be for squeezing honey out of weeds, shall we?" "Not likely, sir," says I. Says he, "How nice it will be to growl

wholesale to a hundred thousand of your countrymen (which they do love a bit of a growl), instead of growling retail to a small family that has got hardened to you!" And there he had me; for I am an Englishman, and proud of it, and attached to all the national habits except delirium tremens. In short, what with him inflaming my dormant conceit, and me thinking, "Well, I can but say my say, and then relapse into befitting silence," I did one day lay down the gauge and take up the pen, in spite of my wife's sorrowful looks.

She says nothing, but you may see she does not believe in the new tool, and that is cheerful and inspiring to a beginner.

However, there is a something that gives me more confidence than all my literary friend says about "workmen being up in the literary world," and that is that I am not the hero of my own story.

Small as I sit here behind my wife's crockery and my own fiddles, in this thundering hole, Wardour Street, I was for many years connected with one of the most celebrated females of modern times. Her adventures run side by side with mine. She is the bit of romance that colors my humble life, and my safest excuse for intruding on the public.

CHAPTER I.

FATHER and mother lived in King Street, Soho: he was a fiddle-maker, and taught me the A B C of that science—at odd times; for I had a regular education, and a very good one, at a school in West Street. This part of my life was as smooth as glass. My troubles did not begin till I was thirteen: at that age my mother died, and then I found out what she *had been* to me: that was the first and the worst grief; the next I thought bad enough: Coming in from school one day, about nine

months after her death, I found a woman sitting by the fire opposite father.

I came to a stand in the middle of the floor, with two eyes like saucers, staring at the pair; so my father introduced me.

"This is your new mother. Anne, this is John!"

"Come and kiss me, John," says the lady. Instead of which John stood stock still, and burst out roaring and crying without the least leaving off staring, which to be sure was a cheerful, encouraging reception for a lady just come into the family. I roared pretty hard for about ten seconds, then stopped dead short, and says I, with a sudden calm, the more awful for the storm that had raged before, "I'll go and tell Mr. Paley!" and out I marched.

Mr. Paley was a little hump-backed tailor, with the heart of a dove and the spirit of a lion or two. I made his acquaintance through pitching into two boys that were queering his protuberances all down Princes Street, Soho; a kind of low humor he detested; and he had taken quite a fancy to me. We were hand and glove, the old man and me.

I ran to Paley and told him what had befallen upon the house. He was not struck all of a heap, as I thought he would be; and he showed me it was legal, of which I had not an idea; and his advice was, "Put a good face on it, or the house will soon be too hot to hold you, boy."

He was right. I don't know whether it was my fault or hers, or both's, but we could never mix. I had seen another face by that fireside, and heard another voice in the house, that seemed to me a deal more melodious than hers, and the house did become hotter, and the inmates' looks colder than agreeable: so one day I asked my father to settle me in some other house not less than a mile from King Street, Soho. He and stepmother jumped at the offer, and apprenticed me to Mr. Dawes. Here I learned more mysteries of guitar-making, violin-making,

etc., etc., and lived in tolerable comfort nearly four years: there was a ripple on the water, though. My master had a brother, a thickset, heavy fellow, that used to bully my master, especially when he was groggy, and less able to take his own part. My master being a good fellow, I used to side with him, and this brought me a skinful of sore bones more than once, I can tell you. But one night, after some months of peace, I heard a terrible scrimmage, and, running down into the shop-parlor, I found Dawes junior pegging into Dawes senior no allowance, and him crying blue murder.

I was now an able-bodied youth between sixteen and seventeen years of age, and, having a little score of my own with the attacking party, I opened quite silent and business-like with a one, two, and knocked him into a corner flat perpendicular. He was dumbfounded for a moment, but the next he came out like a bull at me. I stepped on one side, and met him with a blow on the side of the temple, and knocked him flat horizontal; and when he offered to rise, I shook my fist at him, and threatened him he should come to grief if he dared to move.

At this time he went on quite a different lay. He lay still, and feigned dissolution with considerable skill, to frighten us; and I can't say I felt easy at all; but my master, who took cheerful views of every thing in his cups, got the enemy's tumbler of brandy and water, and with hiccoughs and absurd smiles, and a tea-spoon, deposited the contents gradually on the various parts of his body.

"Lez revive 'm!" said he.

This was low life to come to pass in a respectable tradesman's back parlor. But, when grog comes in at the door, good manners walk to the window, ready to take leave if requested. Where there is drink there is always degradation of some sort or degree: put that in your tumblers and sip it!

After this no more battles. The lowly apprentice's humble efforts (pugilistic) restored peace to his master's family.

Six months of calm industry now rolled over, and then I got into trouble by my own fault.

Looking back upon the various fancies, and opinions, and crotchets that have passed through my head at one time or another, I find that, between the years of seventeen and twenty-four, a strange notion beset me; it was this: that women are all angels.

For this chimera I now began to suffer, and continued to at intervals till the error was rooted out—with their assistance.

There were two women in my master's house—his sister, aged twenty-four, and his cook, aged thirty-seven. With both these I fell ardently in love; and so, with my sentiments, I should have with six, had the house held half a dozen. Unluckily, my affections were not accompanied with the discretion so ticklish a situation called for. The ladies found one another out, and I fell a victim to the virtuous indignation that fired three bosoms.

The cook, in virtuous indignation that an apprentice should woo his master's sister, told my master.

The young lady, in virtuous indig. that a boy should make a fool of "that old woman," told my master, who, unluckily for me, was now the quondam Dawes junior; Dawes senior having retired from the active business, and turned sleeping and drinking partner.

My master, whose v. i. was the strongest of the three, since it was him I had leathered, took me to Bow Street, made his complaint, and forced me to cancel my indentures; the cook, with tears, packed up my Sunday suit; the young lady opened her bedroom door three inches, and shut it with a don't-come-anigh-me slam; and I drifted out to London with eighteen pence and my tools.

On looking back on this incident of my life, I have a regret—a poignant one; it is, that some good Christian

did not give me a devilish good hiding into the bargain then and there.

I did not feel quite strong enough in the spirits to go where I was sure to be blown up, so I skirted King Street and entered the Seven Dials, and went to Mr. Paley and confessed my sins.

How differently the same thing is seen by different eyes! All the morning I had been called a young villain, first by one, then by another, till at last I began to see it. Mr. Paley viewed me in the light of martyr, and I remember I fell into his views on the spot.

Paley was a man that had his little theory about women, and it differed from my juvenile one.

He held that women are at bottom the seducers, men the seduced. "The men court the women, I grant you, but so it is the fish that runs after the bait," said he. "The women draw back? yes, and so does the angler draw back the bait when the fish are shy, don't he? and then the silly gudgeons misunderstand the move, and make a rush at it, and get hooked—like you."

Holding such vile sentiments, he shifted all the blame off my shoulders. He turned to and abused the whole gang, as he called the family in Litchfield Street I had just left, instead of reading me the lesson for the day, which he ought, and I should have listened to from him—perhaps.

"Now, then, don't hang your head like that," shouted the spunky little fellow, "sniveling and whimpering at your time of life! We are going to have a jolly good supper, you and I, that is what *we* are going to do; and you shall sleep here. My daughter is at school; you shall have her room. I am in good work—thirty shillings a week—that is plenty for three, Lucy and you and me" (himself last). "Your father isn't worth a bone button, and your mother isn't worth the shank to it; I'm your father, and your mother into the bargain, for want of a better. You live with me, and snap your fingers at

Dawes and all his crew—ha! ha! a fine loss, to be sure. The boy is a fool—cooks, and coquettes, and fiddle-touters, rubbish not worth picking up out of a gutter—they be d—d.”

And so I was installed in Miss Paley’s apartment, Seven Dials; and nothing would have made my adopted parent happier than for me to put my hands in my pockets, and live upon goose and cabbage. But downright laziness was never my character. I went round to all the fiddle-shops, and offered, as bold as brass, to make a violin, a tenor or a bass, and bring it home. Most of them looked shy at me, for it was necessary to trust me with the wood, and to lend me one or two of the higher class of tools, such as a turning-saw and a jointing-plane.

At last I came to Mr. Dodd, in Berners Street. Here my father’s name stood me in stead. Mr. Dodd risked his wood and the needful tools, and in eight days I brought him, with conceit and trepidation mixed in equal part, a violin, which I had sometimes feared would frighten him, and sometimes hoped would charm him. He took it up, gave it one twirl round, satisfied himself it was a fiddle, good, bad, or indifferent, put it in the window along with the rest, and paid for it as he would for a penny roll. I timidly proposed to make another for him; he grunted a consent, which it did not seem to me a rapturous one.

Mr. Metzler also ventured to give me work of this kind. For some months I wrought hard all day, and amused myself with my companions all the evening, selecting my pals from the following classes: small actors, showmen, pedestrians, and clever discontented mechanics; one lot I never would have at any price, and that was the stupid ones, that could only booze, and could not tell me any thing I did not know about pleasure, business, and life.

This was a bright existence; so it came to a full stop.

At one and the same time Miss Paley came home, and the fiddle-trade took one of those chills all fancy trades are subject to.

No work—no lodging without paying for it—no wherewithal.

CHAPTER II.

JOHN BEARD, a friend of mine, was a painter and grainer. His art was to imitate oak, maple, walnut, satin-wood, etc., etc., upon vulgar deal, beach, or what not.

This business works thus: first a coat of oil-color is put on with a brush, and this color imitates what may be called the background of the wood that is aimed at; on this oil-background the champ, the fibre, the grain and figure, and all the incidents of the superior wood, are imitated by various manœuvres in water-colors, or, rather, in beer-colors, for beer is the approved medium. A coat of varnish over all gives a look of unity to the work.

Beard was out of employ; so was I—bitter against London; so was I. He sounded me about trying the country, and I agreed; and this was the first step of my many travels.

We started the next day—he with his brushes, and a few colors, and one or two thin panels painted by way of advertisement, and I with hope, inexperience, and threepence. On the road we spent this and his five-pence, and entered the town of Brentford toward night-fall as empty as drums and as hungry as wolves.

What was to be done? After a long discussion, we agreed to go to the mayor of the town and tell him our case, and offer to paint his street door in the morning if he would save our lives for the night.

We went to the mayor; luckily for us, he had risen from nothing, as we were going to do, and so he knew exactly what we meant when we looked up in his face

and laid our hands on our sausage-grinders. He gave us eighteen pence and an order on a lodging-house, and put bounds to our gratitude by making us promise to let his street door alone. We thanked him from our hearts, supped and went to bed, and agreed the country (as we two cockneys called Brentford) was chock full of good fellows.

The next day up early in the morning, and away to Hounslow. Here Beard sought work all through the town, and just when we were in despair he got one door. We dined and slept on this door, but we could not sup off it; we had twopence over, though, for the morning, and walked on a penny roll each to Maidenhead.

Here, as we entered the town, we passed a little house with the door painted oak, and a brass plate announcing a plumber and glazier, and house-painter. Beard pulled up before this door in sorrowful contempt. "Now look here, John," says he, "here is a fellow living among the woods, and you would swear he never saw an oak plank in his life to look at his work."

Before so very long we came to another specimen: this was maple, and farther from Nature than a lawyer from heaven, as the saying is. "There, that will do," says Beard. "I'll tell you what it is, we must try a different move; it is no use looking for work; folks will only employ their own tradesmen; we must teach the professors of the art at so much a panel."

"Will they stomach that?" said I.

"I think they will, as we are strangers and from London. You go and see whether there is a fiddle to be doctored in the town, and meet me again in the market-place at twelve o'clock."

I did meet him, and forlorn enough I was. My trade had broke down in Maidenhead; not a job of any sort.

"Come to the public house!" was his first word. That sounded well, I thought.

We sat down to bread and cheese and beer, and he told his tale.

It seems he went into a shop, told the master he was a painter and grainer from a great establishment in London, and was in the habit of traveling and instructing provincial artists in the business. The man was a pompous sort of a customer, and told Beard he knew the business as well as he did, better belike.

Beard answered, "Then you are the only one here that does; for I've been all through the town, and any thing wider from the mark than their oak and maple I never saw." Then he quietly took down his panels and spread them out, and, looking out sharp, he noticed a sudden change come over the man's face.

"Well," says the man, "we reckon ourselves pretty good at it in this town. However, I shouldn't mind seeing how you London chaps do it: what do you charge for a specimen?"

"My charge is two shillings a panel. What wood should you like to gain a notion of?" said Beard, as dry as a chip.

"Well—satin-wood."

Beard painted a panel of satin-wood before his eyes, and, of course, it was done with great ease, and on a better system than had reached Maidenhead up to that time. "Now," says Beard, "I must go to dinner."

"Well, come back again, my lad," says the man, "and we will go in for something else." So Beard took his two shillings and met me as aforesaid.

After dinner he asked for a private room. "A private room," said I; "hadn't you better order our horse and gig out, and go and call on the rector?"

"None of your chaff," says he.

When we got into the room he opened the business.

"Your trade is no good; you must take to mine."

"What! teach painters how to paint, when I don't know a stroke myself!"

"Why not? You've only got it to learn; they have got to unlearn all they know; that is the only long process

about it. "I'll teach you in five minutes," says he: "look here." He then imitated oak before me, and made me do it. He corrected my first attempt; the second satisfied him: we then went on to maple, and so through all the woods he could mimic. He then returned to his customer, and I hunted in another part of the town, and before nightfall I actually gave three lessons to two professors: it is amazing, but true, that I, who had been learning ten minutes, taught men who had been all their lives at it—in the country.

One was so pleased with his tutor that he gave me a pint of beer besides my fee. I thought he was poking fun when he first offered it me.

Beard and I met again triumphant. We had a rousing supper and a good bed, and the next day started for Henley, where we both did a small stroke of business, and on to Reading for the night.

Our goal was Bristol. Beard had friends there. But as we zigzagged for the sake of the towns, we were three weeks walking to that city; but we reached it at last, having disseminated the science of graining in many cities, and got good clothes and money in return.

At Bristol we parted. He found regular employment the first day, and I visited the fiddle-shops and offered my services. At most I was refused; at one or two I got trifling jobs; but at last I went to the right one. The master agreed with me for piece-work on a large scale, and the terms were such that by working quick and very steady I could make about twenty-five shillings a week. At this I kept two years, and might have longer, no doubt—but my employer's niece came to live with him.

She was a woman; and my theory being in full career at this date, mutual ardor followed, and I asked her hand of her uncle, and instead of that he gave me what the Turkish ladies get for the same offense—the sack. Off to London again, and the money I had saved by my in-

dustry just landed me in the Seven Dials and sixpence over.

I went to Paley, crestfallen as usual. He heard my story, complimented me on my energy, industry, and talent, regretted the existence of woman, and inveighed against her character and results.

We went that evening to private theatricals in Berwick Street, and there I fell in with an acquaintance in the fire-work line. On hearing my case, he told me I had just fallen from the skies in time; his employer wanted a fresh hand.

The very next day behold me grinding, and sifting, and ramming powder at Somers Town, and at it ten months.

My evenings, when I was not undoing my own work to show its brilliancy, were often spent in private theatricals.

I hear a row made just now about a dramatic school. "We have no dramatic schools," is the cry. Well, in the day I speak of there were several; why, I belonged to two. We never brought to light an actor, but we succeeded so far as to ruin more than one lad who had brains enough to make a tradesman, till we heated those brains and they boiled all away.

The way we destroyed youth was this: of course, nobody would pay a shilling at the door to see us running wild among Shakspeare's lines like pigs broken into a garden, so the expenses fell upon the actors, and they paid according to the value of the part each played. Richard the Third cost a puppy two pounds; Richmond, fifteen shillings; and so on; so that with us, as in the big world, dignity went by wealth, not merit. I remember this made me sore at the time; still, there are two sides to every thing: they say poverty urges men to crime; mine saved me from it. If I could have afforded, I would have murdered one or two characters that have lived with good reputation from Queen Bess

to Queen Victoria; but as I couldn't afford it, others that could did it for me.

Well, in return for his cash, Richard, or Hamlet, or Othello commanded tickets in proportion; for the tickets were only gratuitous to the spectators.

Consequently, at night, each important actor played not only to a most merciful audience, but a large band of devoted friendly spirits in it, who came, not to judge him, but express to carry him through triumphant—like an election. Now when a vain, ignorant chap hears a lot of hands clapping, he has not the sense to say to himself "paid for!" No, it is applause, and applause stamps his own secret opinion of himself. He was off his balance before, and now he tumbles heel over tip into the notion that he is a genius; throws his commercial prospects after the two pounds that went in Richard or Beverley, and crosses Waterloo Bridge spouting,

"A fico for the shop and poplins base!
Counter, avaunt! I on his southern bank
Will fire the Thames."

Noodle, thus singing, goes over the water. But they won't have him at the Surrey or the Vic., so he takes to the country; and, while his money lasts, and he can pay the mismanager of a small theatre, he gets leave to play with Richard and Hamlet. But when the money is gone, and he wants to be paid for Richard & Co., they laugh at him, and put him in his right place, and that is a utility, and perhaps ends a "super.;" when, if he had not been a coxcomb, he might have sold ribbon like a man to his dying day.

We and our dramatic schools ruined more than one or two of this sort by means of his vanity in my young days.

My poverty saved me. The conceit was here in vast abundance, but not the funds to intoxicate myself with such choice liquors as Hamlet & Co. Nothing above old Gobbo (five shillings) ever fell to my lot and by my talent.

When I had made and let off fire-works for a few months, I thought I could make more as a rocket-master than a rocket-man. I had saved a pound or two. Most of my friends dissuaded me from the attempt; but Paley said, "Let him alone now; don't keep him down; he is born to rise. I'll risk a pound on him." So by dint of several small loans, I got the materials and made a set of fire-works myself, and agreed with the keeper of some tea-gardens at Hampstead for the spot.

At the appointed time, attended by a trusty band of friends, I put them up; and, when I had taken a tolerable sum at the door, I let them all off.

But they did not all profit by the permission. Some went, but others, whose supposed destination was the sky, soared about as high as a house, then returned and forgot their wild nature, and performed the office of our household fires upon the clothes of my visitors; and some faithful spirits, like old domestics, would not leave their master at any price—would not take their discharge. Then there was a row, and I should have been mauled, but my guards rallied round me and brought me off with whole bones, and marched back to London with me, quizzing me and drinking at my expense. The publican refused to give me my promised fee, and my loss by ambition was twenty-eight shillings and my reputation—if you could call that a loss.

Was not I quizzed up and down the Seven Dials! Paley alone contrived to stand out in my favor. "Nonsense! a first attempt," said he; "they mostly fail. Don't you give in for those fools! I'll tell you a story. There was a chap in prison—I forget his name. He lived in the old times a few hundred years ago. I can't justly say how many. He had failed—at something or other—I don't know how many times, and there he was. Well, Jack, one day he notices a spider climbing up a thundering great slippery stone in the wall. She got a little way, then down she fell; up again, and tries it on

again; down again. Ah! says the man, you will never do it. But the spider was game. She got six falls, but, by George, the seventh trial she got up. So the gentleman says 'a man ought to have as much heart as a spider: I won't give in till the seventh trial.' Bless you, long before the seventh he carried all before him, and got to be King of England—or something."

"King of England!" said I; "that was a move upward out of the stone jug."

"Well," said Paley the hopeful, "you can't be King of England, but you may be the fire-king—he! he!—if you are true to powder. How much money do you want to try again?"

I was nettled at my failure, and, fired by Paley and his spider, I scraped together a few pounds once more, and advertised a display of fire-works for a certain Monday night.

On the Sunday afternoon Paley and I happened to walk on the Hampstead Road, and near the Adam and Eve we fell in with an announcement of fire-works. On the bill appeared in enormous letters the following:

"NO CONNECTION WITH THE DISGRACEFUL EXHIBITION THAT TOOK PLACE LAST FRIDAY WEEK!"

Paley was in a towering passion. "Look here, John," says he; "but never you mind; it won't be here long, for I'll tear it down in about half a moment."

"No, you must not do that," said I, a little nervous.

"Why not, you poor-spirited muff?" shouts the little fellow: "let me alone—let me get at it—what are you holding me for?"

"No! no! no! Well, then—"

"Well, then, what?"

"Well, then, it is mine."

"What is yours?"

"That advertisement."

"How can it be yours, when it insults you?"

"Oh! business before vanity."

"Well, I am blessed! Here's a go. Look here, now;" and he began to split his sides laughing; but all of a sudden he turned awful grave: "You will rise, my lad; this is genuine talent; they might as well try to keep a balloon down." In short, my friend, who was as honest as the day in his own sayings and doings, admired this bit of rascality in me, and augured the happiest results.

That district of London which is called the Seven Dials was now divided into two great parties; one augured for me a brilliant success next day, the other a dead failure. The latter party numbered many names unknown to fame, the former consisted of Paley. I was neuter, distrusting, not my merits, but what I called my luck.

On Monday afternoon I was busy putting out the fire-works, nailing them to their posts, etc. Toward evening it began to rain so heavily that they had to be taken in, and the whole thing given up: it was postponed to Thursday.

On Thursday night we had a good assembly; the sum taken at the doors exceeded my expectation. I had my misgivings on account of the rain that had fallen on my kickshaws Monday evening, so I began with those articles I had taken in first out of the rain. They went off splendidly, and my personal friends were astounded; but soon my poverty began to tell. Instead of having many hands to save the fire-works from wet, I had been alone, and of course much time had been lost in getting them under cover. We began now to get among the damp lot, and science was lost in chance; some would and some wouldn't, and the people began to goose me.

A rocket or two that fizzled themselves out without rising a foot inflamed their angry passions; so I announced two fiery pigeons.

The fiery pigeon is a pretty fire-work enough. It is of the nature of a rocket, but, being on a string, it travels backward and forward between two termini, to which

the string is fixed. When there are two strings and two pigeons, the fiery wings race one another across the ground, and charm the gazing throng. One of my termini was a tree at the extremity of the gardens. Up this tree I mounted in my shirt sleeves with my birds. The people surrounded the tree, and were dead silent. I could see their final verdict and my fate hung on these pigeons. I placed them, and with a beating heart lighted their matches. To my horror, one did not move. I might as well have tried to explode green sticks. The other started and went off with great resolution and accompanying cheers toward the opposite side. But midway it suddenly stopped, and the cheers with it. It did not come to an end all at once, but the fire oozed gradually out of it like water. A howl of derision was hurled up into the tree at me; but, worse than that, looking down, I saw in the moonlight a hundred stern faces, with eyes like red-hot emeralds, in which I read my fate. They were waiting for me to come down, like terriers for a rat in a trap, and I felt by the look of them that they would kill me, or near it. I crept along a bough, the end of which cleared the wall and overhung the road. I determined to break my neck sooner than fall into the hands of an insulted public. An impatient orange whizzed by my ear, and an apple knocked my hat out of the premises. I crouched and clung; luckily, I was on an ash-bough, long, tapering, and tough; it bent with me like a rainbow. A stick or two now whizzed past my ear, and it began to hail fruit. I held on like grim death till the road was within six feet of me, and then dropped and ran off home, like a dog with a kettle at his tail. Meantime a rush was made to the gate to cut me off; but it was too late. The garden meandered, and my executioners, when they got to the outside, saw nothing but a fitting spectre—me in my shirt sleeves making for the Seven Dials.

Mr. and Miss Paley were seated by their fire, and, as I

afterward learned, Paley was recommending her to me for a husband, and explaining to her at some length why I was sure to rise in the world, when a figure in shirt sleeves, begrimed with gunpowder, and no hat, burst into the room, and shrank without a word into the corner by the fire.

Miss Paley looked up, and then began to look down and snigger. Her father stared at me, and after a while I could see him set his teeth and nerve his obstinate old heart for the coming struggle.

"Well, how did it happen?" said he, at last. "Where is your coat?"

I told him the whole story.

Miss Paley had her hand to her mouth all the time, afraid to give vent to the feelings proper to the occasion because of her father.

"Now answer me one question. Have you got their money?" says Paley.

"Yes, I have got their money, for that matter."

"Well, then, what need you care? You are all right; and if they had gone off they would have been all over by now, just the same. He wants his supper, Lucy. Give us something hot, to make us forget our squibs and crackers, or we shall die of a broken heart, all us poor fainting souls. Such a calamity! The rain wetted them through—that is all; you couldn't fight against the elements, could you? Lay the cloth, girl."

"But, Mr. Paley," whined I, "they have got my new coat, and you may be sure they have torn it limb from jacket."

"Have they?" cried he; "well, that is a comfort, any way. Your new coat, eh? Lucy, it hung on the boy's back like an old sack. Do you see this bit of cloth? I shall make you a Sunday coat with this, and then you'll sell. Fetch a quart to-night, girl, instead of a pint: the fire-king is going to do us the honor. Che-er up!!"

CHAPTER III.

It was now time that Miss Paley should suffer the penalty of her sex. She was a comely, good-humored, and sensible girl. We used often to walk out together on Sundays, and very friendly we were. I used to tell her she was the flower of her sex, and she used to laugh at that. One Sunday I spoke more plainly, and laid my heart, my thirteen shillings, the fruit of my last imposture on the public, and my various arts, at her feet, out walking.

A proposal of this sort, if I may trust the stories I read, produces thrilling effects. If agreeable, the ladies either refuse in order to torment themselves, which act of virtue justifies them, they think, in tormenting the man they love, or else they show their rapturous assent by bursting out crying, or by fainting away, or their lips turning cold, and other signs proper to a disordered stomach; if it is to be "no," they are almost as much cut up about it, and say no like yes, which has the happy result of leaving him hope and prolonging his pain. Miss Paley did quite different. She blushed a little, and smiled archly and said, "Now, John, you and I are good friends, and I like you very much, and I will walk with you and laugh with you as much as you like; but I have been engaged these two years to Charles Hook, and I love him, John."

"Do you, Lucy?"

"Yes," under her breath a bit.

"Oh!"

"So, if we are to be friends, you must not put that question to me again, John. What do you say? we are to be friends, are we not?" and she put out her hand.

"Yes, Lucy."

"And, John, you need not go for to tell my father; what is the use vexing him? He has got a notion, but it will pass away in time."

I consented, of course, and Lucy and I were friends.

Mr. Paley somehow suspected which way his daughter's heart turned, and not long after a neighbor told me he heard him quizzing her unmerciful for her bad judgment. As for harshness or tyranny, that was not under his skin, as the saying is. He wound up with telling her that John was a man safe to rise.

"I hope he may, father, I am sure," says Lucy.

"Well, and can't you see he is the man for you?"

"No, father, I can't see that—he! he!"

CHAPTER IV.

I DON'T think I have been penniless not a dozen times in my life. When I get down to twopence or threepence, which is very frequent indeed, something is apt to turn up and raise me to silver once more, and there I stick. But about this time I lay out of work a long time, and was reduced to the lowest ebb. In this condition, a friend of mine took me to the "Harp," in Little Russell Street, to meet Mr. Webb, the manager of a strolling company. Mr. Webb was beating London for recruits to complete his company which lay at Bishops Stortford, but which, owing to desertions, was not numerous enough to massacre five-act plays. I instantly offered to go as carpenter and scene-shifter. To this he demurred: he was provided with them already; he wanted actors. To this I objected, not that I cared to what sort of work I turned my hand, but in these companies a carpenter is paid for his day's work according to his agreement, but the actors are remunerated by a share in the night's profits, and the profits are often written in the following figures £0 0s. 0d.

However, Mr. Webb was firm; he had no carpenter's place to offer me, so I was obliged to lower my pretensions. I agreed then to be an actor. I was cast as Father Philip, in the "Iron Chest," next evening, my share of the profits to be one eighth. I borrowed a shilling, and my friend Johnstone and I walked all the way to Bishops Stortford. We played the "Iron Chest" and divided the profits. Hitherto I had been in the mechanical arts; this was my first step into the fine ones. Father Philip's share of the "Chest" was $2\frac{1}{2}d.$

Now this might be a just remuneration for the performance; I almost think it was; but it left the walk, thirty miles, not accounted for.

The next night I was cast in "Jerry Sneak." I had no objection to the part, only, under existing circumstances, the place to play it seemed to me to be the road to London, not the boards of Bishops Stortford; so I sneaked off toward the Seven Dials. Johnstone, though cast for the hero, was of Jerry's mind, and sneaked away along with him.

We had made but twelve miles when the manager and a constable came up with us. Those were peremptory days; they offered us our choice of the fine arts again, or prison. After a natural hesitation, we chose the arts, and were driven back to them like sheep. Night's profits $5d.$ In the morning the whole company dissolved away like a snowball. Johnstone and I had a meagre breakfast, and walked on it twenty-six miles. He was a stout fellow—shone in brigands—he encouraged and helped me along; but at last I could go no farther.

My slighter frame was quite worn out with hunger and fatigue. "Leave me," I said; "perhaps some charitable hand will aid me, and if not, why then I shall die; and I don't care if I do, for I have lost all hope."

"Nonsense," cried the fine fellow. "I'll carry you home on my back sooner than leave you. Die? that is a word a man should never say. Come! courage! only four miles more."

No. I could not move from the spot. I was what I believe seldom really happens to any man, dead beat body and soul.

I sank down on a heap of stones. Johnstone sat down beside me.

The sun was just setting. It was a bad look-out—starving people to lie out on stones all night. A man can stand cold, and he can fight with hunger; but put those two together, and life is soon exhausted.

At last a rumble was heard, and presently an empty coal-wagon came up. A coal-heaver sat on the shaft, and another walked by the side. Johnstone went to meet them; they stopped; I saw him pointing to me, and talking earnestly.

The men came up to me; they took hold of me, and shot me into the cart like a hundred weight of coal. "Why, he is starving with cold," said one of them, and he flung half a dozen empty sacks over me, and on we went. At the first public the wagon stopped, and soon one of my new friends, with a cheerful voice, brought a pewter flagon of porter to me. I sipped it. "Don't be afraid of it," cried he; "down with it; it is meat and drink, that is." And, indeed, so I found it. It was a heavenly solid liquid to me; it was "stout" by name and "stout" by nature.

These good fellows, whom men do right to call black diamonds, carried me safe into the Strand, and thence, being now quite my own man again, I reached the Seven Dials. Paley was in bed. He came down directly in his night-gown, and lighted a fire, and pulled a piece of cold beef out of the cupboard, and cheered me as usual, but in a fatherly way this time; and of course, at my age, I was soon all right again, and going to take the world by storm to-morrow morning. He left me for a while and went up stairs. Presently he came down again.

"Your bed is ready, John."

"Why," said I, "you have not three rooms."

"Lucy is on a visit," said he; then he paused. "Stop a bit; I'll warm your bed."

He took me up stairs to my old room and warmed the bed. I, like a thoughtless young fool, rolled into it, half gone with sleep, and never woke till ten next morning.

I don't know what the reader will think of me when I tell him that the old man had turned Lucy out of her room into his own, and sat all night by the fire that I might lie soft after my troubles. Ah! he was a bit of steel. And have you left me, and can I share no more sorrow or joy with you in this world? Eh! dear, it makes me misty to think of the old man—after all these years.

CHAPTER V.

I USED often to repair and doctor a violin for a gent whom I shall call Chaplin. He played in the orchestra of the Adelphi Theatre. Mr. Chaplin was not only a customer, but a friend. He saw how badly off I was, and had a great desire to serve me. Now it so happened that Mr. Yates, the manager, was going to give an entertainment he called his "At Homes," and this took but a small orchestra, of which Mr. Chaplin was to be the leader; so he was allowed to engage the other instruments, and he actually proposed to me to be a second violin.

I stared at him. "How can I do that?"

"Why, I often hear you try a violin."

"Yes, and I always play the same notes; perhaps you have observed that too?"

"I notice it is always a slow movement—eh? Never mind, this is the only thing I can think of to serve you; you must strum out something; it will be a good thing for you, you know."

"Well," said I, "if Mr. Yates will promise to sing nothing faster than 'Je-ru-sa-lem, my hap-py home,' I'll accompany him."

No, he would not be laughed out of it; he was determined to put money in my pocket, and would take no denial. "Next Monday you will have the goodness to meet me at the theatre at six o'clock with your fiddle. Play how you like, play inaudible for what I care; but play and draw your weekly salary you must and shall."

"Play inaudible"—these words sunk to the very bottom of me—"play inaudible."

I fell into a brown study: it lasted three days and three nights; finally, to my good patron's great content, I consented to come up to the scratch, and Monday night I had the hardihood to present myself in the music-room of the Adelphi. My violin was a ringing one. I tuned up the loudest of them all, and Mr. Chaplin's eye rested on me with an approving glance.

Time was called. We played an overture, and accompanied Mr. Yates in his recitatives and songs, and performed pieces and airs between the acts, etc. The leader's eye often fell on me, and when it did, he saw the most conscientious workman of the crew plowing every note with singular care and diligence.

In this same little orchestra was James Bates, another favorite of Mr. Chaplin, and an experienced fiddler.

This young man was a great chum of mine. He was a fine, honest young fellow, but of rather a satanine temper. He was not movable to mirth at any price. He would play without a smile to a new pantomime—stuck there all night, like Solomon cut in black marble with a white choker, as solemn as a tomb, with hundreds laughing all around.

Once or twice while we were at work I saw Mr. Chaplin look at Bates, knowing we two were chums, and whenever he did it seems the young one bit his lips and turned as red as a beet-root. After the lights were out Mr.

Chaplin congratulated me before Bates. "There, you see, it is not so very hard; why, hang me if you did not saw away as well as the best!!!" At these words Bates gave a sort of yell and ran home. Mr. Chaplin looked after him with surprise. "There's some devil's delight up between you two," said he. "I shall find it out."

Next night in the tuning-room my fiddle was so resin-ant it attracted attention, and one or two asked leave to try it. "Why not?" said I.

During work Mr. Chaplin had one eye on me and one on Bates, and caught the perspiration running down my face, and him simpering for the first time in the history of the Adelphi.

"What has come over Jem Bates?" said Mr. Chaplin to me; "the lad is all changed. You have put some of your late gunpowder into him; there is something up between you two." After the play he got us together, and he looked Bates in the face, and just said to him "Eh?"

At this wholesale interrogatory Bates laid hold of himself tight. "No, Mr. Chaplin, sir, I can't; it will kill me when it does come out of me."

"When what comes out? You young rascals, if you don't both of you tell me, I'll break my fiddle over Bates, and Jack shall mend it free of expense gratis for nothing, that is how I'll serve mutineers; come, out with it."

"Tell him, John," said Bates, demurely.

"No," said I, "tell him yourself, if you think it will gratify him." I had my doubts.

"Well," said Bates, "it is ungrateful to keep you out of it, sir, so—he! he!—I'll tell you, sir—this second violin has two bows in his violin-case."

"Well, stupid, what is commoner than that for a fiddler?"

"But this is not a fiddler," squeaked Bates; "he's only a bower. Oh! oh! oh!"

"Only a bower?"

"No! Oh! Oh! I shall die; it will kill me." I gave a sort of ghastly grin myself.

"You unconscionable scoundrels!" shouted Mr. Chaplin; "there, look at this Bates; he is at it again; a fellow that the very clown could never raise a laugh out of, and now I see him all night smirking, and grinning, and looking down like a jackdaw that has got his claw on a thimble. If you don't speak out, I'll knock your two tormenting skulls together till they roll off down the gutter side by side, chuckling and giggling all day and all night." At this direful mysterious threat Bates composed himself. "The power is all out of my body, sir, so now I can tell you."

He then in faint tones gave this explanation, which my guilty looks confirmed. "One of his bows is resined, sir—that one is the tuner. I don't know whether you have observed, but he tunes rather louder than any two of us. Oh dear, it is coming again."

"Don't be a fool, now. Yes, I have noticed that."

"The other bow, Mr. Chaplin, sir, the other bow is soaped—well soaped, sir, for orchestral use. Ugh! ugh!"

"Oh, the varmint!"

Bates continued. "You take a look at him—you see him fingering and bowing like mad—but as for sound, you know what a greasy bow is?"

"Of course I do. I don't wonder at your laughing—ha! ha! ha! Oh, the thief—when I think of his diligent face, and him shaking his right wrist like Viotti."

"Mind your pockets, though; he knows too much."

It was now my turn to speak. "I am glad you like the idea, sir," said I, "for it comes from you."

"How can you say that?"

"What did you tell me to do?"

"I didn't tell you to do that. I don't remember what I told him, Bates—not to the letter."

"Told me to play inaudible!!!"

"Well, I never," said Mr. Chaplin.

"Those were your words, sir; they did not fall to the ground, you see."

My position in this orchestra, and the situations that arose out of it, were meat and drink to my two friends. With the gentry, whose lives are a succession of amusements, a joke soon wears out, no doubt; but we poor fellows can't let one go cheap. How do we know how long it may be before Heaven sends us another? A joke falling among us is like a rat in a kennel of terriers.

At intricate passages the first violin used to look at the tenor, and then at me, and wink, and they both swelled with innocent enjoyment, till at last unknown powers of gayety budded in Bates. With quizzing his friend he learned to take a jest, so much so that one night Mr. Yates being funnier than usual if possible, a single horse-laugh suddenly exploded among the fiddles. This was Bates gone off all in a moment after his trigger being pulled so many years to no purpose. Mr. Yates looked down with gratified surprise.

"Halloo! Brains got in the orchestra; after that, any thing!"

But do you think it was fun to me all this? I declare I suffered the torture of the—you know what. I never felt safe a moment. I had placed myself next to an old fiddler who was deaf, but he somehow smelt at times that I was shirking, and then he used to cry, "Pull out, pull out; you don't pull out."

"How can you say so?" I used to reply, and then saw away like mad; when, so connected are the senses of sight and hearing apparently, the old fellow used to smile and be at peace. He saw me pull, and so he heard me pull out. Then sometimes friends of the other performers would be in the orchestra, and peep over me, and say civil things, and I wish them farther, civilities and all. But it is a fact that for two months I gesticulated in that orchestra without a soul finding out that I was not suiting the note to the action.

At last we broke up, to my great relief, but I did not leave the theatre. Mr. Widger, Mr. Yates's dresser, got me a place behind the scenes at nine shillings per week.

I used to dress Mr. Reeve, and run for his brandies and waters, which kept me on the trot, and do odd jobs.

But I was now to make the acquaintance that colored all my life, or the cream of it. My time was come to move in a wider circle of men and things, and really to do what so many fancy they have done—to see the world.

In the month of April, 1828, Mr. Yates, theatrical manager, found his nightly receipts fall below his nightly expenses. In this situation, a manager falls upon one of two things—a spectacle or a star. Mr. Yates preferred the latter, and went over to Paris and engaged Mademoiselle Djek.

Mademoiselle Djek was an elephant of great size and unparalleled sagacity. She had been for some time performing in a play at Franconi's, and created a great sensation in Paris.

Of her previous history little is known. But she was first landed from the East in England, and was shown about merely as an elephant by her proprietor, an Italian called Polito. The Frenchmen first found out her talent. Her present owner was a M. Huguet, and with him Mr. Yates treated. She joined the Adelphi company at a salary of £40 a week and her grub.

There was great expectation in the theatre for some days. The play in which she was to perform, "The Elephant of the King of Siam," was cast and rehearsed several times; a wooden house was built for her at the back of the stage, and one fine afternoon, sure enough, she arrived with all her train, one or two of each nation, viz., her owner, M. Huguet (French); her principal keeper, Tom Elliot (English); her subordinates—Bernard, (French), and an Italian nicknamed Pippin. She arrived at the stage door in Maiden Lane, and soon after the messenger was sent to Mr. Yates's house.

"Elephant's come, sir."

"Well, let them put her in the place built for her, and I'll come and see her."

"They can't do that, sir."

"Why not?"

"La! bless you, sir, she might get her foot into the theatre, but how is her body to come through the stage door? Why, she is almost as big as the house."

Down comes Mr. Yates, and there was the elephant standing all across Maiden Lane—all traffic interrupted except what could pass under her belly—and such a crowd—my eye!

Mr. Yates put his hands in his pockets and took a quiet look at the state of affairs.

"You must make a hole in the wall," said he.

Pickaxes went to work, and made a hole, or rather a frightful chasm in the theatre, and when it looked about two thirds her size Elliot said "Stop!" He then gave her a sharp order, and the first specimen we saw of her cleverness was her doubling herself together and creeping in through that hole, bending her fore knees, and afterward rising and dragging her hind legs horizontally, and she disappeared like an enormous mole burrowing into the theatre.

Mademoiselle Djek's bills were posted all over the town, and every thing done to make her take, and on the following Tuesday the theatre was pretty well filled by the public; the manager also took care to have a strong party in the pit. In short, she was nursed as other stars are upon their *débüt*.

Night came; all was anxiety behind the lights and expectation in front.

The green curtain drew up, and Mr. Yates walked on in black dress-coat and white kid gloves, like a private gentleman just landed out of a bandbox at the Queen's ball. He was the boy to talk to the public: soft sawder—dignified reproach—friendly intercourse—he had them

all at his fingers' ends. This time it was the easy tone of refined conversation upon the intelligent creature he was privileged to introduce to them. I remember his discourse as well as if it was yesterday.

"The elephant," said Mr. Yates, "is a marvel of Nature. We are now to have the pleasure of showing her to you as taking her place in art." Then he praised the wisdom and beneficence of creation. "Among the small animals, such as cats and men, there is to be found such a thing as spite; treachery ditto, and love of mischief, and even cruelty at odd times; but here is a creature with the power to pull down our houses about our ears like Samson, but a heart that will not let her hurt a fly. Properly to appreciate her moral character, consider what a thing power is; see how it tries us—how often in history it has turned men to demons. The elephant," added he, "is the friend of man by choice, not by necessity or instinct; it is born as wild as a lion or buffalo, but, the moment an opportunity arrives, its kindred intelligence allies it to man, its only superior or equal in reasoning power. We are about," said Mr. Yates, "to present a play in which an elephant will act a part, and yet act but herself, for the intelligence and affectionate disposition she will display on these boards as an actress are merely her own private and domestic qualities. Not every one of us actors, gentlemen, can say as much."

Then there was a laugh, in which Mr. Yates joined. In short, Mr. Yates, who could play upon the public ear better than some fiddles (I name no names), made his *débutante* popular before ever she stepped upon the scene. He then bowed with intense gratitude to the audience for the attention they had honored him with, retired to the prompter's side, and, as he reached it, the act drop flew up and the play began. It commenced on two legs; the elephant did not come on until the second scene of the act.

The drama was a good specimen of its kind. It was

a story of some interest, and length, and variety, and the writer had been sharp enough not to make the elephant too common in it. She came on only three or four times, and always at a nick of time, and to do good business—as theatricals say, *i. e.*, for some important purpose in the story.

A king of Siam had lately died, and the elephant was seen taking her part in the funeral obsequies. She deposited his sceptre, etc., in the tomb of his fathers, and was seen no more in that act. The rightful heir to this throne was a young prince, to whom the elephant belonged. A usurper opposed him, and a battle took place; the rightful heir was worsted and taken prisoner; the usurper condemned him to be thrown into the sea. In the next act, this sentence was being executed: four men were discovered passing through a wood carrying no end of a box. Suddenly a terrific roar was heard; the men put down the box rather more carefully than they would in real life, and fled, and the elephant walked on to the scene alone like any other actress. She smelt about the box, and presently tore it open with her proboscis, and there was her master, the rightful heir, but in a sad exhausted state. When the good soul sees this, what does she do but walk to the other side, and tear down the bough of a fruit-tree and hand it to the sufferer. He sucked it, and it had the effect of stout on him: it made a man of him, and they marched away together, the elephant trumpeting to show her satisfaction.

In the next act the rightful heir's friends were discovered behind the bars of a prison at a height from the ground. The order for their execution arrived, and they were down upon their luck terribly. In marched the elephant, tore out the iron bars, and squeezed herself against the wall, half squatting in the shape of a triangle; so then the prisoners glided down her to the ground slantendicular one after another.

When the civil war had lasted long enough to sicken

both sides, and enough widows and orphans had been made, the Siamese began to ask themselves, But what is it all about? The next thing was, they said, "What asses we have been! Was there no other way of deciding between two men but bleeding the whole tribe?" Then they reflected and said, We are asses, that is clear; but we hear there is one animal in the nation that is not an ass; why, of course, then she is the one to decide our dispute. Accordingly, a grand assembly was held, the rival claimants were compelled to attend, and the elephant was led in. Then the high-priest, or some such article, having first implored Heaven to speak through the quadruped, bade her decide according to justice. No sooner were the words out of his mouth than the elephant stretched out her proboscis, seized a little crown that glittered on the usurper's head, and, waving it gracefully in the air, deposited it gently and carefully on the brows of the rightful heir. So then there was a rush made on the wrongful heir. He was taken out guarded, and warned off the premises; the rightful heir mounted the throne, and grinned and bowed all round—the elephant trumpeted—Siam hurraed—Djek's party in the house echoed the sound, and down came the curtain in thunders of applause. Though the curtain was down, the applause continued most vehemently, and after a while a cry arose at the back of the pit, "Elephant! Elephant!" That part of the audience that had paid at the door laughed at this, but their laughter turned to curiosity when, in answer to the cry, the curtain was raised, and the stage discovered empty. Curiosity in turn gave way to surprise, for the elephant walked on from the third grooves alone, and came slap down to the float. At this, the astonished public literally roared at her. But how can I describe the effect, the amazement, when, in return for the compliment, the *débutante* slowly bent her knees and courtesied twice to the British public, and then retired backward as the curtain once more fell?

People looked at one another, and seemed to need to read in their neighbor's eyes whether such a thing was real; and then followed that buzz which tells the knowing ones behind the curtain that the nail has gone home; that the theatre will be crammed to the ceiling to-morrow night, and perhaps for eighty nights after.

Mr. Yates fed Mademoiselle Djek with his own hand that night, crying, "Oh you duck!"

The fortunes of the Adelphi rose from that hour—full houses without intermission.

Mr. Yates shortened his introductory address, and used to make it a brief, neat, and, I think, elegant eulogy of her gentleness and affectionate disposition; her talent "the public are here to judge for themselves," said Mr. Yates, and exit P. S.

A theatre is a little world, and Djek soon became the hero of ours. Every body must have a passing peep at the star that was keeping the theatre open all summer, and providing bread for a score or two of families connected with it. Of course, a mind like mine was not among the least inquisitive. But her head-keeper, Tom Elliot, a surly fellow, repulsed our attempts to scrape acquaintance. "Mind your business, and I'll mind mine," was his chant. He seemed to be wonderfully jealous of her. He could not forbid Mr. Yates to visit her, as he did us, but he always insisted on being one of the party even then. He puzzled us; but the strongest impression he gave us was that he was jealous of her—afraid that she would get as fond of some others as of him, and so another man might be able to work her, and his own nose lose a joint, as the saying is. Later on we learned to put a different interpretation on his conduct. Pippin the Italian, and Bernard the Frenchman, used to serve her with straw and water, etc., but it was quite a different thing from Elliot. They were like a fine lady's grooms and running footmen, but Elliot was her body-servant, groom of the bed-chamber, or what not. He used always

to sleep in the straw close to her. Sometimes, when he was drunk, he would roll in between her legs; and if she had not been more careful of him than any other animal ever was (especially himself), she must have crushed him to death three nights in the week. Next to Elliot, but a long way below him, M. Huguet seemed her favorite. He used to come into her box, and caress her, and feed her, and make much of her; but she never went on the stage without Elliot in sight; and, in point of fact, all she did upon our stage was done at a word of command given then and there at the side by this man and no other—going down to the float, courtesying, and all.

Being mightily curious to know how he had gained such influence with her, I made several attempts to sound him, but, drunk or sober, he was equally unfathomable on this point.

I then endeavored to slake my curiosity at No. 2. I made bold to ask M. Huguet how he had won her affections. The Frenchman was as communicative as the native was reserved. He broke plenty of English over me. It came to this, that the strongest feeling of an elephant was gratitude, and that he had worked on this for years; was always kind to her, and seldom approached her without giving her lumps of sugar—carried a pocketful on purpose. This tallied with what I had heard and read of an elephant; still the problem remained, Why is she fonder still of this Tom Elliot, whose manner is not ingratiating, and who never speaks to her but in a harsh, severe voice.

She stood my friend, any way. A good many new supers were engaged to play with her, and I was set over these, looked out their dresses, and went on with them and her as a slave: nine shillings a week for this was added to my other nine which I drew for dressing an actor or two of the higher class.

The more I was about her the more I felt that we were not at the bottom of this quadruped, nor even of her bi-

ped. There were gestures, and glances, and shrugs always passing to and fro among them.

One day, at the rehearsal of a farce, there was no Mr. Yates. Somebody inquired loudly for him.

"Hush!" says another; "haven't you heard?"

"No."

"You mustn't talk of it out of doors."

"No!"

"Half killed by the elephant this morning."

It seems he was feeding and coaxing her, as he had often done before, when all in a moment she laid hold of him with her trunk and gave him a squeeze. He lay in bed six weeks with it, and there was nobody to deliver her eulogy at night. Elliot was at the other end of the stage when the accident happened. He heard Mr. Yates cry out, and ran in, and the elephant let Mr. Yates go the moment she saw him.

We questioned Elliot. We might as well have cross-examined the Monument. Then I inquired of M. Huguet what this meant. That gentleman explained to me that Djek had miscalculated her strength; that she wanted to caress so kind a manager, who was always feeding and courting her, and had embraced him too warmly.

The play went on, and the elephant's reputation increased. But her popularity was destined to receive a shock as far as we little ones behind the curtain were concerned.

One day, while Pippin was spreading her straw, she knocked him down with her trunk, and, pressing her tooth against him, bored two frightful holes in his skull before Elliot could interfere. Pippin was carried to St. George's Hospital, and we began to look in one another's faces.

Pippin's situation was in the market.

One or two declined it. It came down to me. I reflected, and accepted it: another nine shillings; total, twenty-seven shillings.

That night two supers turned tail. An actress also, whose name I have forgotten, refused to go on with her. "I was not engaged to play with a brute," said this lady, "and I won't." Others went on as usual, but were not so sweet on it as before. The rightful heir lost all relish for his part, and, above all, when his turn came to be preserved from harm by her, I used to hear him crying out of the box to Elliot, "Are you there? are you sure you are there?" and, when she tore open his box, Garrick never acted better than this one used to now, for you see his cue was to exhibit fear and exhaustion, and he did both to the life, because for the last five minutes he had been thinking, "Oh dear! oh dear! suppose she should do the foot business on my box instead of the proboscis business."

These, however, were vain fears. She made no mistake before the public.

Nothing lasts forever in this world, and the time came that she ceased to fill the house. Then Mr. Yates re-engaged her for the provinces, and, having agreed with the country managers, sent her down to Bath and Bristol first. He had a good opinion of me, and asked me to go with her and watch his interests. I should not certainly have applied for the place, but it was not easy to say no to Mr. Yates, and I felt I owed him some reparation for the wrong I had done that great artist in accompanying his voice with my gestures.

In short, we started, Djek, Elliot, Bernard, I, and Pip-pin, on foot (he was just out of St. George's). Messrs. Huguet and Yates rolled in their carriage to meet us at the principal towns where we played.

As we could not afford to make her common, our walking was all night-work, and introduced me to a rough life.

The average of night weather is wetter and windier than day, and many a vile night we tramped through when wise men were abed; and we never knew for cer-

tain where we should pass the night, for it depended on Djek. She was so enormous that half the inns could not find us a place big enough for her." Our first evening stroll was to Bath and Bristol; thence we crossed to Dublin, thence we returned to Plymouth. We walked from Plymouth to Liverpool, playing with good success at all these places. At Liverpool she laid hold of Bernard and would have settled his hash, but Elliot came between them.

That same afternoon, in walks a young gentleman dressed in the height of Parisian fashion—glossy hat, satin tie, trowsers puckered at the haunches—sprucer than any poor Englishman will be while the world lasts, and who was it but Mons. Bernard come to take leave. We endeavored to dissuade him. He smiled and shook his head, treated us, flattered us, and showed us his preparations for France.

All that day and the next he sauntered about us dressed like a gentleman, with his hands in his pockets, and an ostentatious neglect of his late affectionate charge. Before he left he invited me to drink something at his expense, and was good enough to say I was what he most regretted leaving.

"Then why go?" said I.

"I will tell you, *mon pauvre garçon*," said Mons. Bernard. "We old hands have all got our orders to say she is a duck. Ah! you have found that out of yourself. Well, now, as I have done with her, I will tell you a part of her character, for I know her well. Once she injures you she can never forgive you. So long as she has never hurt you there's a fair chance she never will. I have been about her for years, and she never molested me till yesterday. But, if she once attacks a man, that man's death-warrant is signed. I can't altogether account for it, but trust my experience, it is so. I would have staid with you all my life if she had not shown me my fate, but not now. *Merci!* I have a wife and two children in

France. I have saved some money out of her. I return to the bosom of my family; and if Pippin stays with her after the hint she gave him in London, why, you will see the death of Pippin, my lad, voilà tout, that is, if you don't go first. Qu'est que ça te fait à la fin? tu es garçon toi—buvons!"

The next day he left us, and left me sad for one. The quiet determination with which he acted upon positive experience of her was enough to make a man thoughtful; and then Bernard was the flower of us: he was the drop of mirth and gayety in our iron cup. He was a pure, unadulterated Frenchman; and, to be just, where can you find any thing so delightful as a Frenchman—of the right sort?

He fluttered home singing

"Les doux yeux de ma brunet—te,

Tout—e mignonett—e—tout—e—gentillet—e,"

and left us all in black.

God bless you, my merry fellow. I hope you found your children healthy, and your brunette true, and your friends alive, and that the world is just to you, and smiles on you, as you do on it, and did on us.

From Liverpool we walked to Glasgow, from Glasgow to Edinburgh, and from Edinburgh on a cold starry midnight we started for Newcastle.

In this interval of business let me paint you my companions Pippin and Elliot. The reader is entitled to this, for there must have been something out of the common in their looks, since I was within an ace of being killed along of the Italian's face, and was imprisoned four days through the Englishman's mug.

The Italian whom we know by the nickname of Pippin was a man of immense stature and athletic mould. His face, once seen, would never be forgotten. His skin, almost as swarthy as Othello's, was set off by dazzling ivory teeth, and lighted by two glorious large eyes, black as jet, brilliant as diamonds; the orbs of black lightning

gleamed from beneath eyebrows that many a dandy would have bought for mustaches at a high valuation. A nose like a reaping-hook completed him. Perch him on a tolerable-sized rock, and there you had a black eagle.

As if this was not enough, Pippin would always wear a conical hat; and had he but stepped upon the stage in "Masaniello" or the like, all the other brigands would have sunk down to a rural police by the side of our man. But now comes the absurdity. His inside was not different from his out; it was the exact opposite. You might turn over twenty thousand bullet heads and bolus eyes before you could find one man so thoroughly harmless as this thundering brigand. He was just a pet, a universal pet of all the men and women that came near him. He had the disposition of a dove and the heart of a hare. He was a lamb in wolf's clothing.

My next portrait is not so pleasing.

A MAN TURNED BRUTE.

Some ten years before this, a fine, stout young English rustic entered the service of Mademoiselle Djek. He was a model for bone and muscle, and had two cheeks like roses. When he first went to Paris he was looked on as a curiosity there. People used to come to Djek's stable to see her, and Elliot, the young English Samson. Just ten years after this young Elliot had got to be called "old Elliot." His face was not only pale, it was colorless; it was the face of a walking corpse. This came of ten years' brandy and brute. I have often asked people to guess the man's age, and they always guessed sixty, sixty-five, or seventy—oftenest the latter.

He was thirty-five—not a day more.

This man's mind had come down along with his body. He understood nothing but elephant; he seldom talked, and then nothing but elephant. He was an elephant-man. I will give you an instance which I always thought curious.

An elephant, you may have observed, can not stand

quite still. The great weight of its head causes a nodding movement, which is perpetual when the creature stands erect. Well, this Tom Elliot, when he stood up, used always to have one foot advanced, and his eye half closed, and his head niddle-nodding like an elephant all the time; and with it all such a presence of brute and absence of soul in his mug, enough to give a thoughtful man some very queer ideas about man and beast.

CHAPTER VI.

My office in this trip was merely to contract for the elephant's food at the various places; but I was getting older and shrewder, and more designing than I used to be, and I was quite keen enough to see in this elephant the means of bettering my fortunes, if I could but make friends with her. But how to do this? She was like a coquette: strange admirers welcome; but when you had courted her a while she got tired of you, and then nothing short of your demise satisfied her caprice. Her heart seemed inaccessible except to this brute Elliot, and he, drunk or sober, guarded the secret of his fascination by some instinct, for reason he possessed in a very small degree.

I played the spy on quadruped and biped, and I found out the fact, but the reason beat me. I saw that she was more tenderly careful of him than a mother of her child. I saw him roll down stupid drunk under her belly, and I saw her lift first one foot and then the other, and draw them slowly and carefully back, trembling with fear lest she might make a mistake and hurt him.

But why she was a mother to him and a stepmother to the rest of us, that I could not learn.

One day, between Plymouth and Liverpool, having left Elliot and her together, I happened to return, and I found the elephant alone and in a state of excitement, and looking in I observed some blood upon the straw.

His turn has come at last, was my first notion; but, looking round, there was Elliot behind me.

"I was afraid she had tried it on with you," I said.

"Who?"

"The elephant."

Elliot's face was not generally expressive, but the look of silent scorn he gave me at the idea of the elephant attacking him was worth seeing. The brute knew something I did not know, and could not find out; and from this one piece of knowledge he looked down upon me with a sort of contempt that set all the Seven Dials' blood on fire.

"I will bottom this," said I, "if I die for it."

My plan now was to feed Djek every day with my own hand, but never to go near her without Elliot at my very side and in front of the elephant.

This was my first step.

We were now drawing toward Newcastle, and had to lie at Morpeth, where we arrived late, and found Mr. Yates and M. Huguet, who had come out from Newcastle to meet us; and at this place I determined on a new move which I had long meditated.

Elliot, I reflected, always slept with the elephant. None of the other men had ever done this. Now might there not be some magic in this unbroken familiarity between the two animals?

Accordingly, at Morpeth, I pretended there was no bed vacant in the inn, and asked Elliot to let me lie beside him: he grunted an ungracious assent.

Not to overdo it at first, I got Elliot between me and Djek, so that if she was offended at my intrusion she must pass over her darling to resent it. We had tramped a good many miles, and were soon fast asleep.

About two in the morning I was awoke by a shout and a crunching, and felt myself dropping into the straw out of the elephant's mouth. She had stretched her proboscis over him—had taken me up so delicately that

I felt nothing, and when Elliot shouted I was in her mouth. At his voice, that rung in my ears like the last trumpet, she dropped me like a hot potato. I rolled out of the straw, giving tongue a good one, and ran out of the shed. I had no sooner got to the inn than I felt a sickening pain in my shoulder and fainted away.

Her huge tooth had gone into my shoulder like a wedge. It was myself I had heard being crunched.

They did what they could for me, and I soon came to. When I recovered my senses I was seized with vomiting; but at last all violent symptoms abated, and I began to suffer great pain in the injured part, and did suffer for six weeks.

And so I scraped clear. Somehow or other, Elliot was not drunk, or nothing could have saved me. For a second wonder, he, who was a heavy sleeper, woke at the very slight noise she made eating me: a moment later, and nothing could have saved me. I use too many words—suppose she had eaten me—what then?

They told Mr. Yates at breakfast, and he sent for me, and advised me to lie quiet at Morpeth till the fever of the wound should be off me; but I refused. She was to start at ten, and I told him I should start with her.

Running from grim death like that, I had left my shoes behind in the shed, and M. Huguet sent his servant Baptiste, an Italian, for them.

Mr. Yates then asked me for all the particulars, and while I was telling him and M. Huguet, we heard a commotion in the street, and saw people running, and presently one of the waiters ran in and cried,

“The elephant has killed a man, or near it.”

Mr. Yates laughed and said,

“Not quite so bad as that; for here is the man.”

“No, no,” cried the waiter, “it is not him; it is one of the foreigners.”

Mr. Yates started up all trembling. He ran to the stable. I followed him as I was, and there we saw a

sight to make our blood run cold. On the corn-bin lay poor Baptiste crushed into a mummy. How it happened there was no means of knowing; but, no doubt, while he was groping in the straw for my wretched shoes, she struck him with her trunk, perhaps more than once; his breast-bones were broken to chips, and every time he breathed, which by God's mercy was not many minutes, the man's whole chest-frame puffed out like a bladder with the action of his lungs: it was too horrible to look at.

Elliot had run at Baptiste's cry, but too late to save his life this time. He had drawn the man out of the straw as she was about to pound him to a jelly, and there the poor soul lay on the corn-bin, and by his side lay the things he had died for—two old shoes. Elliot had found them in the straw, and put them there of all places in the world.

By this time all Morpeth was out. They besieged the doors and vowed death to the elephant. M. Huguet became greatly alarmed. He could spare Baptiste, but he could not spare Djek. He got Mr. Yates to pacify the people. "Tell them something," said he.

"What on earth can I say for her over that man's bleeding body?" said Mr. Yates. "Curse her! would to God I had never seen her!"

"Tell them he used her cruel," said M. Huguet; "I have brought her off with that before now."

Well, my sickness came on again, partly, no doubt, by the sight and the remorse, and I was got to bed, and lay there some days; so I did not see all that passed, but I heard some, and I know the rest by instinct now.

Half an hour after breakfast-time Baptiste died. On this the elephant was detained by the authorities, and a coroner's inquest was summoned, and sat in the shambles on the victim, with the butcheress looking on at the proceedings.

Pippin told me she took off a juryman's hat during

the investigation, waved it triumphantly in the air, and placed it cleverly on her favorite's head, old Tom.

At this inquest two or three persons deposed on oath that the deceased had ill used her more than once in France; in particular, that he had run a pitchfork into her two years ago; that he had been remonstrated with, but in vain; unfortunately, she had recognized him at once, and killed him out of revenge for past cruelty, or to save herself from fresh outrages.

This cooled the ardor against her. Some even took part with her against the man.

"Run a pitchfork into an elephant! Oh! for shame! no wonder she killed him at last. How good of her not to kill him then and there—what forbearance—forgave it for two years, ye see."

There is a fixed opinion among men that an elephant is a good, kind creature. The opinion is fed by the proprietors of elephants, who must nurse the notion or lose their customers, and so a set tale is always ready to clear the guilty and criminate the sufferer; and this tale is greedily swallowed by the public. You will hear and read many such tales in the papers before you die. Every such tale is a lie.

How curiously things happen! Last year, *i. e.*, more than twenty years after this event, my little girl went for a pound of butter to Newport Street. She brought it wrapped up in a scrap of a very old newspaper; in unrolling it, my eye, by mere accident, fell upon these words: "An inquest." I had no sooner read the paragraph than I put the scrap of paper away in my desk: it lies before me now, and I am copying it.

"An inquest was held at the Phoenix Inn, Morpeth, on the 27th ultimo, on view of the body of an Italian named Baptiste Bernard, who was one of the attendants on the female elephant which lately performed at the Adelphi. It appeared from the evidence that the man had stabbed the elephant in the trunk with a pitchfork about two

years ago while in a state of intoxication, and that on the Tuesday previous to the inquest the animal caught hold of him with her trunk and did him so much injury that he died in a few hours. Verdict, died from the wounds and bruises received from the trunk of an elephant. Deodand, 5s."

Well, this has gone all abroad, for print travels like wind; and it is not fair to the friends and the memory of this Baptiste Bernard to print that he died by his own cruelty, or fault, or folly, so take my deposition, and carry it to Milan, his native city.

I declare upon oath that the above is a lie; that the man was never an attendant upon the female elephant; he was an attendant on the female Huguet; for he was that lady's footman. His first introduction to Mademoiselle Djek was her killing him, and he died, not by any fault of his own, but by the will of God and through ignorance of the real nature of the *full-grown elephant*, the cunningest, most treacherous, and bloodthirsty beast that ever played the butcher among mankind.

What men speak dissolves in the air, what they print stands fast and will look them in the face to all eternity. I print the truth about this man's death: so help me God.

Business is business. As soon as we had got the inquest over and stamped the lie current, hid the truth and buried the man, we marched south and played our little play at Newcastle.

Deodand for a human soul sent by murder to its account, five bob.

After Newcastle we walked to York, and thence to Manchester. I crept along thoroughly crestfallen. Months and months I had watched, and spied, and tried to pluck out the heart of this Tom Elliot's mystery; I had failed. Months and months I had tried to gain some influence over Djek; I had failed. But for Elliot, it was clear I should not live a single day within reach of her

trunk: this brute was my superior. I was compelled to look up to him, and I *did look up to him*.

As I tramped sulkily along, my smarting shoulder reminded me that in elephant, as in every thing else I had tried, I was Jack, not master.

The proprietors had their cause of discontent too. We had silenced the law, but we could not silence opinion. Somehow suspicion hung about her in the very air wherever she went. She never throve in the English provinces after the Morpeth job, and finding this, Mr. Yates said, "Oh, hang her, she has lost her character here; send her to America." So he and M. Huguet joined partnership and took this new speculation on their shoulders. America was even in that day a great card if you went with an English or French reputation.

I had been thinking of leaving her and her old Tom in despair; but, now that other dangers and inconveniences were to be endured besides her and her trunk, by some strange freak of human nature, or by fate, I began to cling to her like a limpet to a rock the more you pull at him.

Mr. Yates dissuaded me. "Have nothing to do with her, Jack; she will serve you like all the rest. Stay at home, and I'll find something for you in the theatre."

I thought a great deal of Mr. Yates for this, for he was speaking against his own interest. I was a faithful servant to him, and he needed one about her. Many a five-pound note I had saved him already, and well he deserved it at my hands.

"No, sir," I said, "I shall be of use, and I can't bear to be nonplushed by two brutes like Elliot and her. I have begun to study her, and I must go on to the word 'finis!'"

Messrs. Yates and Huguet insured the elephant for £20,000, and sent us all to sea together in the middle of November, a pretty month to cross the Atlantic in.

This was what betters call a hedge, and not a bad one.

Our party was Queen Djek ; Mr. Stevenson, her financier ; Mr. Gallott, her stage-manager and wrongful heir ; Elliot, her keeper, her lord, her king ; Pippin, her slave, always trembling for his head ; myself, her commissariat ; and one George Hinde, from Wombwell's, her man-of-all-work.

She had a stout cabin built upon deck for her. It cost £40 to make ; what she paid for the accommodation heaven knows, but I should think a good round sum, for it was the curse of the sailors and passengers, and added fresh terrors to navigation. The steersman could not see the ship's head until the sea took the mariners' part and knocked it into toothpicks.

Captain Sebor had such a passage with us as he had never encountered before. He told us so—and no wonder ; he never had such a wholesale murderess on board before—contrary winds forever, and stiff gales too. At last it blew great guns ; and one night, as the sun went down crimson in the Gulf of Florida, the sea running mountains high, I saw Captain Sebor himself was fidgety. He had cause. That night a tempest came on ; “the Ontario” rolled fearfully and groaned like a dying man ; about two in the morning a sea struck her, smashed Djek's cabin to atoms, and left her exposed and reeling ; another such would now have swept her overboard, but her wits never left her for a moment. She threw herself down flatter than any man could have conceived possible ; out went all her four legs, and she glued her belly to the deck ; the sailors passed a chain from the weather to the lee bulwarks, and she seized it with her proboscis, and held on like grim death. Poor thing, her coat never got not to say dry ; she was like a great water-rat all the rest of the voyage.

The passage was twelve weeks of foul weather. The elephant began to be suspected of being the cause of this, and the sailors often looked askant at her, and said we should never see port till she walked the plank into

the Atlantic. If her underwriters saved their twenty thousand pounds, it was touch and go more than once or twice. Moreover, she ate so little all the voyage that it was a wonder to Elliot and me how she came not to die of sickness and hunger. I suppose she survived it all because she had more mischief to do.

As the pretty little witches sing in Mr. Locke's opera of "Macbeth,"

She must, she must, she must, she must, she must shed
—much—more—blood.

CHAPTER VII.

OUR preposterous long voyage deranged all the calculations that had been made for us in England, and we reached New York just at the wrong time. We found Master Burke playing at the Park Theatre, and we were forced to treat with an inferior house, the Bowery Theatre. We played there with but small success compared with what we had been used to in Europe. Master Burke filled the house—we did not fill ours—so that at last she was actually eclipsed by a human actor; to be sure it was a boy, not a man, and child's play is sometimes preferred by the theatre-going world even to horse-play.

The statesmen were cold to us; they had not at this time learned to form an opinion of their own at sight on such matters, and we did not bring them an overpowering European verdict to which they had nothing to do but sign their names. There was no groove cut for the mind to run in, and while they hesitated, the speculation halted. I think she would succeed there now; but at this time they were not ripe for an elephant.

We left New York, and away to Philadelphia on foot and steam-boat.

There is a place on the Delaware where the boat draws

up to a small pier. Down this we marched, and about ten yards from the end the floor gave way under her weight, and Djek and her train fell into the sea. I was awoke from a reverie, and found myself sitting right at top of her, with my knees in Chesapeake Bay. Elliot had a rough Benjamin on, and as he was coming thundering down with the rest of the rubbish alive and dead, it caught in a nail, and he hung over the bay by the shoulder like an Indian fakir, cursing and swearing for all the world like a dog barking. I never saw such a posture—and, oh! the language!

I swam out, but Djek was caught in a trap between the two sets of piles. The water was about two feet over her head, so that every now and then she disappeared, and then striking the bottom she came up again, plunging, and rolling, and making waves like a steamboat. Her trunk she kept vertical, like the hose of a diving-bell, and oh! the noises that came up from the bottom of the sea through that flesh-pipe! For about four hours she went up and down the gamut of "O Lord, what shall I do?" more than a thousand times, I think. We brought ropes to her aid, and boats and men, and tried all we knew to move her, but in vain; and when we had exhausted our sagacity, she drew upon a better bank—her own. Talk of brutes not being able to reason—gammon. Djek could reason like Solomon; for each fresh difficulty she found a fresh resource. On this occasion she did what I never saw her do before or since: she took her enormous skull, and used it as a battering-ram against the piles; two of them resisted—no wonder—they were about eight inches in diameter; the third snapped like glass, and she plunged through and waddled on shore. I met her with a bucket of brandy and hot water—stiff.

Ladies, who are said to sip this compound in your boudoirs while your husbands are smoking at the clubs, but I don't believe it of you, learn how this lady disposed

of her wooden tumbler full. She thrust her proboscis into it. Whis—s—s—s—p! now it is all in her trunk. Whis—s—s—sh! now it is all in her abdomen: one breath drawn and exhaled sent it from the bucket home. This done, her eye twinkled, and she trumpeted to the tune of "All is well that ends well."

I should weary the reader were I to relate at length all the small incidents that befell us in the United States.

The general result was failure, loss of money, our salaries not paid up, and fearful embarrassments staring us in the face. We scraped through without pawning the elephant, but we were often on the verge of it. All this did not choke my ambition. Warned by the past, I never ventured near her (unless Elliot was there) for twelve months after our landing; but I was always watching Elliot and her to find the secret of his influence.

A fearful annoyance to the leaders of the speculation was the drunkenness of Old Tom and George Hinde: these two encouraged one another and defied us, and of course they were our masters, because no one but Elliot could move the elephant from place to place, or work her on the stage.

One night Elliot was so drunk that he fell down senseless at the door of her shed on his way to repose. I was not near, but Mr. Gallott it seems was, and he told us she put out her proboscis, drew him tenderly in, laid him on the straw, and flung some straw over him or partly over him. Mr. Gallott is alive, and a public character; you can ask him whether this is true: I tell this one thing on hearsay.

Not long after this, in one of the American towns, I forget which, passing by Djek's shed, I heard a tremendous row. I was about to call Elliot, thinking it was the old story, somebody getting butchered; but, I don't know how it was, something stopped me, and I looked cautiously in instead, and saw Tom Elliot walking into her with a pitchfork, she trembling like a schoolboy with

her head in a corner, and the blood streaming from her sides. As soon as he caught sight of me he left off and muttered unintelligibly. I said nothing. I thought the more.

CHAPTER VIII.

WE had to go by water to a place called City Point, and thence to Pittsville. I made a mistake as to the hour the boat started, and Djek and Co. went on board without me.

Well, you will say I could follow by the next boat. But how about the tin to pay the passage? My pocket was dry, and the treasurer gone on. But I had a good set of blacking-brushes; so sold them, and followed on with the proceeds—got to City Point. Elephant gone on to Pittsville; that I expected. Twenty miles or so I had to tramp on an empty stomach. And now doesn't the devil send me a fellow who shows me a short cut through a wood to Pittsville: into the wood I go. I thought it was to be like an English wood—out of the sun into a pleasant shade, and, by then you are cool, into the world again. Instead of that, "the deeper, the deeper you are in it," as the song of the bottle says, the farther you were from getting out of it. Presently two roads instead of one, and then I knew I was done. I took one road: it twisted like a serpent. I had not been half an hour on it before I lost all the points of the compass. Says I, I don't know whether I ever shall see daylight again; but if I do, City Point will be the first thing I shall see. You mark my words, said I.

So here was I lost in what they call a wood out there, but we should call a forest at home. And now, being in the heart of it, I got among the devilishest noises, and nothing to be seen to account for them; little feet suddenly pattering and scurrying along the ground, wings

flapping out of trees ; but what struck most awe into a chap from the Seven Dials was the rattle—the everlasting rattle, and nothing to show. Often I have puzzled myself what this rattle could be. It was like a thousand rattlesnakes, and didn't I wish I was in the Seven Dials, though some get lost in them for that matter. After all, I think it was only insects, but insects by billions ; you never heard any thing like it in an English wood.

Just as I was losing heart in this enchanted wood, I heard an earthly sound, the tramp of a horse's foot. It was music.

But the leaves were so thick I could not see where the horse was ; he seemed to get farther off, and then nearer. At last the sound came so close I made a run, burst through a lot of green leaves, and came out plump on a man riding a gray cob. He up with the butt-end of his whip to fell me, but, seeing I was respectable, "Halloo ! stranger," says he, "guess you sort o' startled me." "Beg pardon, sir," says I, "but I have lost my way." "I see you are a stranger," said he.

So then he asked me where I was bound for, and I told him Pittsville.

I won't insult the reader by telling him what he said about the course I had been taking through the wood. I might as well tell him his A B C, or which side his bread and butter falls in the dust on. Then he asked me who I was. So I told him I was one of the elephant's domestics, leastways I did not word it so candid : "I was in charge of the elephant, and had taken a short cut."

Now he had heard of Djek, and seen her bills up, so he knew it was all right. "How am I to find my way out, sir?" said I. "Find your way out?" said he. "You will never find your way out." Good news, that.

He thought a bit ; then he said, "The best thing you can do is to come home with me, and to-morrow I will send you on."

I could have hugged him.

"You had better walk behind me," says he; "my pony bites." So I tramped astern; and on we went, patter, patter, patter through the wood. At first I felt as jolly as a sandboy marching behind the pony; but when we had pattered best part of an hour, I began to have my misgivings. In all the enchanted woods ever I had read of, there was a small trifle of a wizard or ogre that took you home and settled your hash. Fee faw fum, I smell the blood of an Englishmun, etc.

And still on we pattered, and the sun began to decline, and the wood to darken, and still we pattered on. I was just thinking of turning tail and slipping back among the panthers, and musquitoes, and rattlesnakes, when, O be joyful, we burst on a clearing, and there was a nice house in the middle of it, and out came the dogs jumping to welcome us, and niggers no end with white eyeballs and grinders like snow.

They pulled him off his horse, and in we went. There was his good lady, and his daughter—a beautiful girl, and such a dinner. We sat down, and I maintained a modest taciturnity for some minutes: "The silent hog eats the most acorns." After dinner he shows me all manner of ways of mixing the grog, and I show him one way of drinking it—when you can get it. Then he must hear about the elephant. So I tell him the jade's history, but bind him to secrecy.

Then the young lady puts in. "So you are really an Englishman?" and she looks me all over.

"That you may take your oath of, miss," says I.

"Oh!" says she, and smiles. I did not take it up at first, but I see what it was now. Me standing five feet four, I did not come up to her notion of the Father of all Americans. "Does this great people spring from such a little stock as we have here?" thinks my young lady. I should have up and told her the pluck makes the man, and not the inches; but I lost that chance. Then, being pressed with questions, I told them all my adventures,

and they hung on my words. It was a new leaf to them, I could see that.

The young lady's eyes glittered like two purple stars at a stranger with the gift of the gab that had seen so much life as I had, and midnight came in no time. Then I was ushered to bed. Now up to that time I had always gone to roost without pomp or ceremony; sometimes with a mould candle, but oftener a farthing dip, which I *have* seen it dart its beams out of a bottle instead of a flat candlestick.

This time a whole cavalcade of us went up the stairs: one blackie marched in my van with two lights, two blackies brought up my rear. They showed me into a beautiful room, and stood in the half-light with eyes and teeth like red-hot silver, glittering and diabolical. I thought, of course, they would go away now. Not they. Presently one imp of darkness brings me a chair.

I sit down, and wonder. Other two lay hold of my boots and whip them off. This done, they buzz about me like black and white fiends, fidgeting, till I longed to punch their heads. They pull my coat off and my trowsers; then they hoist me into bed: this done, first one makes a run and tucks me in, and grins over me diabolical; then another comes like a battering-ram, and tucks me in tighter. Fiend 3 looks at the work, and puts the artful touches at the corners, and behold me wedged, and then the beneficent fiends mizzled with a hearty grin that seemed to turn them all ivory. I could not believe my senses: I had never been tucked in since my mother's time.

In the morning, struggled out, and came down to breakfast. Took leave of the good Samaritan, who appointed two of my niggers to see me out of the wood; made my bow to the ladies, and away with a grateful heart. The niggers conducted me clear of the wood and set me on the broad road. Then came one of the pills a poor fellow has to stomach. I had made friends with

the poor darkies, and now I had not even a few pence to give them, and such a little would have gone so far with them! I have often felt the bitterness of poverty, but never I do think as when I parted with my poor niggers at the edge of the wood, and was forced to see them go slowly home without a farthing.

I wish these few words could travel across the water, and my good host might read them, and see I have not forgotten him all these years. But, dear heart! you may be sure he is not upon the earth now. It is years ago, and a man that had the heart to harbor a stranger and a wanderer, why he would be one of the first to go.

We steamed and tramped up and down the United States of America. On our return to Norfolk she broke loose at midnight, slipped into the town, took up the trees on the Boulevard and strewed them flat, went into the market, broke into a vegetable shop, munched the entire stock, next to a coachmaker's, took off a carriage-wheel, opened the door, stripped the cushions, and we found her eating the stuffing.

One day at noon we found ourselves fourteen miles from the town, I forget its name, we had to play in that very night. Mr. Gallott had gone on to rehearse, etc., and it behooved us to be marching after him. At this juncture, old Tom, being rather drunk, feels a strong desire to be quite drunk, and refuses to stir from his brandy and water. Our exchequer was in no condition to be trifled with thus: if Elliot & Co. became helpless for an hour or two, we should arrive too late for the night's performance, and Djek eating her head off all the while. I coaxed and threatened our two brandy sponges, but in vain; they stuck and sucked. I was in despair, and, being in despair, came to a desperate resolution: I determined to try and master her myself then and there, and to defy these drunkards.

I told Pippin my project. He started back aghast. He viewed me in the light of a madman. "Are you

tired of your life?" said he. But I was inflexible. Seven Dials' pluck was up. I was enraged with my drunkards, and I was tired of waiting so many years the slave of a quadruped whose master was a brute.

Elephants are driven with a rod of steel sharpened at the end; about a foot from the end of this weapon is a large hook; by sticking this hook into an elephant's ear, and pulling it, you make her sensible which way you want her to go, and persuade her to comply.

Armed with this tool, I walked up to Djek's shed, and, in the most harsh and brutal voice I could command, bade her come out. She moved in the shed, but hesitated. I repeated the command still more repulsively, and out she came toward me very slowly.

With beasts such as lions, tigers, and elephants, great promptitude is the thing. Think for them! don't give *them* time to think, or their thoughts may be evil. I had learned this much, so I introduced myself by driving the steel into Djek's ribs, and then hooking her ear, while Pippin looked down from a first story window. If Djek had known how my heart was beating she would have killed me then and there; but, observing no hesitation on my part, she took it all as a matter of course, and walked with me like a lamb. I found myself alone with her on the road, and fourteen miles of it before us. It was a serious situation, but I was ripe for it now. All the old women's stories and traditions about an elephant's character had been driven out of me by experience and washed out with blood. I had fathomed Elliot's art. I had got what the French call the riddle-key of *Made-moiselle Djek*, and that key was "steel!"

On we marched, the best of friends. There were a number of little hills on the road, and as we mounted one, a figure used to appear behind us on the crest of the last between us and the sky: this was the gallant Pippin, solicitous for his friend's fate, but desirous of not partaking it if adverse. And still the worthy Djek and I

marched on the best of friends. About a mile out of the town she put out her trunk and tried to curl it round me in a caressing way. I met this overture by driving the steel into her till the blood squirted out of her. If I had not, the syren would have killed me in the course of the next five minutes. Whenever she relaxed her speed I drove the steel into her. When the afternoon sun smiled gloriously on us and the poor thing felt nature stir in her heart, and began to frisk in her awful clumsy way, pounding the great globe, I drove the steel into her; if I had not, I should not be here to relate this sprightly narrative.

Meantime, at —, her stage-manager and financier were in great distress and anxiety; four o'clock, and no elephant. At last they got so frightened, they came out to meet us, and presently, to their amazement and delight, Djek strode up with her new general. Their ecstasy was great to think that the whole business was no longer at a drunkard's mercy. "But how did you manage? How ever did ye win her heart?" "With this," said I, and showed them the bloody steel.

We had not been in the town half an hour before Tom and George came in. They were not so drunk but what they trembled for their situations after my exploit, and rolled and zigzagged after us as fast as they could.

By these means I rose from mademoiselle's slave to be her friend and companion.

CHAPTER IX.

THIS feat kept my two drunkards in better order, and revived my own dormant ambition. I used now to visit her by myself, steel in hand, to feed her, etc., and scrape acquaintance with her by every means—steel in hand. One day I was feeding her, when suddenly I thought a house had fallen on me. I felt myself crashing against

the door, and there I was lying upon it in the passage with all the breath driven clean out of my body. Pippin came and lifted me up and carried me into the air. I thought I should have died before breath could get into my lungs again. She had done this with a push from the thick end of her proboscis. After a while I came to. I had no sooner recovered my breath than I ran into the stable, and came back with a pitchfork. Pippin saw my intention, and implored me, for Heaven's sake, not to. I would not listen to him: he flung his arms round me. I threatened to turn the fork on him if he did not let me go.

"Hark!" said he; and, sure enough, there she was snorting and getting up her rage. "I know all about that," said I; "my death-warrant is drawn up, and if I don't strike it will be signed. This is how she has felt her way with all of them before she has killed them. I have but one chance of life," said I, "and I won't throw it away without a struggle." I opened the door, and, with a mind full of misgivings, I walked quickly up to her. I did not hesitate to raise the question which of us two was to suffer, I knew that would not do. I sprang upon her like a tiger, and drove the pitchfork into her trunk. She gave a yell of dismay and turned a little from me; I drove the fork into her ear.

Then came out her real character.

She wheeled round, ran her head into a corner, stuck out her great buttocks, and trembled all over like a leaf. I stabbed her with all my force for half an hour till the blood poured out of every square foot of her huge body, and, during the operation, she would have crept into a nutshell if she could. I filled her as full of holes as a cloved orange.

The blood that trickled out of her saved mine; and, for the first time, I walked out of her shambles her master.

One year and six months after we had landed at New York to conquer another hemisphere, we turned tail and

sailed for England again. We had a prosperous voyage with the exception of one accident. George Hinde, from incessant brandy, had delirium tremens, and one night, in a fit of it, he had just sense enough to see that he was hardly to be trusted with the care of himself. "John," said he to me, "tie me to this mast, hand and foot." I demurred; but he begged me for Heaven's sake, so I bound him hand and foot as per order. This done, some one called me down below, and while I was there it seems George got very uncomfortable, and began to halloo and complain. Up comes the captain—sees a man lashed to the mast. "What game is this?" says he. "It is that little blackguard John," says Hinde; "he caught me sleeping against the mast, and took a mean advantage; do loose me, captain!" The captain made sure it was a sea-jest, and loosed him with his own hands. "Thank you, captain," says George, "you are a good fellow. God bless you all!" and with these words he ran aft and jumped into the sea. A Yankee sailor made a grab at him and just touched his coat, but it was too late to save him, and we were going before the wind ten knots an hour. Thus George Hinde fell by brandy; his kindred spirit, old Tom, seemed ready to follow, without the help of water, salt or fresh. This man's face was now a uniform color, white, with a scarce perceptible bluish-yellowish tinge. He was a moving corpse.

Drink forever! it makes men thieves, murderers, asses, and paupers; but what about that, so long as it sends them to an early grave with "beast" for their friends to write over their tomb-stones, unless they have a mind to tell lies in a church-yard, and that is a common trick.

We arrived at the mouth of the Thames.

Some boats boarded us with fresh provisions and delicacies; among the rest, one I had not tasted for many a day: it is called soft-tommy at sea, and on land bread. The merchant stood on tiptoe and handed a loaf toward me, and I leaned over the bulwarks and stretched down

to him with a shilling in my hand. But, as ill luck would have it, the shilling slipped from my fingers and fell. If it had been some men's it would have fallen into the boat, other's into the sea, slap; but it was mine, and so it fell on the boat's very rim, and then danced to its own music into the water. I looked after it in silence; a young lady, with whom I had made some little acquaintance during the voyage, happened to be at my elbow, and she laughed most merrily as the shilling went down. I remember being astonished that she laughed. The man still held out the bread, but I shook my head. "I must go without now," said I; the young lady was quite surprised. "Why, it is worth a guinea," cried she. "Yes, miss," said I, sheepishly, "but we can't always have what we like, you see; I ought to have held my shilling tighter."

"Your shilling," cries she. "Oh!" and she dashed her hand into her pocket and took out her purse, and I could see her beautiful white fingers tremble with eagerness as they dived among the coin. She soon bought the loaf, and, as she handed it to me, I happened to look in her face, and her cheek was red and her eyes quite brimming. Her quick woman's heart had told her the truth, that it was a well-dressed and tolerably well-behaved man's last shilling, and he returning after years of travel to his native land.

I am sure, until the young lady felt for me, I thought nothing of it; I had been at my last shilling more than once. But when I saw she thought it hard, I began to think it was hard, and I remember the water came into my own eyes. Heaven bless her, and may she never want a shilling in her pocket, nor a kind heart near her to show her the world is not all made of stone.

We had no money to pay our passage, and we found Mr. Yates somewhat embarrassed. We had cost him a thousand or two, and no return; so while he wrote to Mons. Huguet, that came to pass in England which we had always just contrived to stay off abroad.

The elephant was pawned.

And now I became of use to the proprietors. I arranged with the mortgagees, and they made the spout a show-place. I used to exhibit her and her tricks, and with the proceeds I fed her, and Elliot, and myself.

We had been three weeks in pledge, when, one fine morning, as I was showing off seated on the elephant's back, I heard a French exclamation of surprise and joy; I looked down, and there was M. Huguet. I came down to him, and he, whose quick eye saw a way through me out of drunken Elliot, gave a loose to his feelings, and embraced me *à la Française*, "which made the common people very much to admire," as the song has it; also a polite howl of derision greeted our Continental affection. H. Huguet put his hand into his pocket, and we got out of limbo, and were let loose upon suffering humanity once more.

They talk as if English gold did every thing; but it was French gold bought us off, I know that, for I saw it come out of his pocket.

As soon as we were redeemed we took an engagement at Astley's, and, during this engagement, cadaverous Tom, finding we could master her, used to attend less and less to her, and more and more to brandy.

A certain baker, who brought her loaves every morning for breakfast, used to ask me to let him feed her himself. He admired her, and took this way of making her fond of him. One day I had left these two friends and their loaves together for a minute, when I heard a fearful cry. I knew the sound too well by this time, and, as I ran back, I had the sense to halloo at her: this saved the man's life. At the sound of my voice she dropped him from a height of about twelve feet, and he rolled away like a ball of worsted. I dashed in, up with the pitchfork, and into her like lightning, and, while the blood was squirting out of her from a hundred little prong-holes, the poor baker limped away.

Any gentleman or lady who wishes to know how a man feels when seized by an elephant, preparatory to being squelched, can consult this person; he is a respectable tradesman; his name is Johns; he lives near Astley's Theatre, or used to, and for obvious reasons can tell you this one anecdote out of many such better than I can; that is if he has not forgotten it, and *I dare say he hasn't*—ask him!

After Astley's, Drury Lane engaged us to play second to the Lions of Mysore; rather a down-come; but we went. In this theatre we behaved wonderfully. Notwithstanding the number of people continually buzzing about us, we kept our temper, and did not smash a single one of these human gnats, so trying to our little female irritability and feeble nerves. The only thing we did wrong was, we broke through a granite mountain and fell down on to the plains, and hurt our knee, and broke one super—only one.

The Lions of Mysore went a starrng to Liverpool, and we accompanied them. While we were there the cholera broke out in England, and M. Huguot summoned us hastily to France. We brushed our hats, put on our gloves, and walked at one stretch from Liverpool to Dover. There we embarked for Boulogne: Djek, cadaverous Tom, wolf-skin-lamb Pippin, and myself. I was now in Huguot's service at fifty francs a week as coadjutor and successor of cadaverous Tom, whose demise was hourly expected even by us who were hardened by use to his appearance, which was that of the ghost of delirium tremens. We arrived off Boulogne Pier; but there we were boarded by men in uniforms and mustaches, and questions put about the cholera, which disease the civic authorities of Boulogne were determined to keep on the other side of the Channel. The captain's answer proving satisfactory, we were allowed to run into the port.

In landing any where Djek and her attendants had al-

ways to wait till the other passengers had got clear, and we did so on this occasion. At length our turn came; but we had no sooner crossed the gangway and touched French ground than a movement took place on the quay, and a lot of bayonets bristled in our faces, and "Halte là!" was the word. We begged an explanation; in answer, an officer glared with eyes like saucers, and pointed with his finger at Elliot. The truth flashed on us. The Frenchmen were afraid of cholera coming over from England, and here was a man who looked plague, cholera, or death himself in person. We remonstrated through an interpreter, but Tom's face was not to be refuted by words. Some were for sending us back home to so diseased a country as this article must have come out of; but milder measures prevailed. They set apart for our use a little corner of the quay, and there they roped us in and sentineled us. And so for four days, in the polished kingdom of France, we dwelt in a hut ruder far than any on the banks of the Ohio. Drink forever! At last, as Tom Coffin got neither a worse nor a better color, they listened to reason, and let us loose upon the nation at large, and away we tramped for Paris.

Times were changed with us in one respect: we no longer marched to certain victory; our long ill-success in America had lessened our arrogance, and we crept along toward Paris. But, luckily for us, we had now a presiding head, and a good one. The soul of business is puffing, and no man puffed better than our chief, M. Huguet. Half way between Boulogne and Paris we were met by a cavalier carrying our instructions how we were to enter Paris; and, arrived at St. Denis, instead of going straight on, we skirted the town, and made our formal entry by the Bois de Boulogne and the Arch of Triumph. Huguet had come to terms with Franconi, and, to give Djek's engagement more importance, Franconi's whole troop were ordered out to meet us and escort us in. They paraded up and down the Champs

Elysées first, to excite attention and inquiry, and, when the public were fairly agog, our cavalcade formed outside the barrier, and came glittering and prancing through the arch. An elephant has her ups and downs like the rest. Djek, the despised of Kentucky and Virginia, burst on Paris the centre of a shining throng. Franconi's bright amazons and exquisite cavaliers rode to and fro our line, carrying sham messages with earnest faces; Djek was bedecked with ribbons, and seemed to tread more majestically, and our own hearts beat higher, as, amid grace, and beauty, and pomp, sun shining—hats waving—feathers bending—mob cheering—trumpets crowing—and flints striking fire, we strode proudly into the great city, the capital of pleasure.

CHAPTER X.

THESE were bright days to me. I was set over old Tom—fancy that; and my salary doubled his. I had fifty francs a week, and cleared as much more by showing her privately in her stable.

Money melts in London—it evaporates in Paris. Pip-pin was a great favorite both with men and women behind the scenes at Franconi's. He introduced me to charming companions of both sexes; gayety reigned, and tin and morals "made themselves air, into which they vanished," Shakspeare.

Toward the close of her engagement Djek made one of her mistakes; she up with her rightful heir and broke his ribs against the side scenes.

We nearly had to stop her performances; we could not mend our rightful heir by next night, and substitutes did not pour in. "I won't go on with her," "I won't play with her," was a cry that even the humblest and neediest began to raise. I am happy to say that she was not under my superintendence when this rightful heir came to grief.

And now the cholera came to Paris, and theatricals of all sorts declined, for there was a real tragedy playing in every street. The deaths were very numerous and awfully sudden; people were struck down in the streets as if by lightning; gloom and terror hung over all.

When this terrible disease is better known it will be found to be of the nature of strong poison, and its cure, if any, will be strychnine, belladonna, or, likelier still, some quick and deadly mineral poison that kills the healthy with cramps and discoloration.

In its rapid form cholera is not to be told from quick poison, and hence sprung up among the lower order in Paris a notion that wholesale poisoning was on foot.

Pippin and I were standing at the door of a wine-shop waiting for our change. His wild appearance attracted first one and then another. Little knots of people collected and eyed us; then they began to talk and murmur, and cast suspicious glances. "Come away," said Pippin, rather hastily. We walked off; they walked after us, increasing like a snowball, and they murmured louder and louder. I asked Pippin what the fools were gabbling about. He told me they suspected us of being the poisoners. At this I turned round, and, being five feet four, and English, was for punching some of their heads; but the athletic pacific Italian would not hear of it, much less co-operate; and now they surrounded us just at the corner of one of the bridges, lashing themselves into a fury, and looking first at us, and then at the river below. Pippin was as white as death, and I thought it was all up myself, when by good luck a troop of mounted gendarmes issued from the palace. Pippin hailed them; they came up, and, after hearing both sides, took us under their protection, and off we marched between two files of cavalry, followed by the curses of a superficial populace. Extremes don't do. Pippin was the color of ink, Elliot of paper; both their mugs fell under suspicion, and nearly brought us to grief.

Franconi closed, and Djek, Huguet, and Co. started on a provincial tour.

They associated themselves on this occasion with Michelet, who had some small wild animals, such as lions, tigers, and leopards.

Our first move was to Versailles. Here we built a show-place and exhibited Djek, not as an actress, but as a private elephant, in which capacity she did the usual elephant business, besides a trick or two that most of them have not brains enough for, whereof anon.

Michelet was the predecessor of Van Amburgh and Carter, and did every thing they do a dozen years before they were ever heard of; used to go into the lions' den, pull them about, and put his head down their throats, and their paws round his neck, etc., etc.

I observed this man, and learned something from him. Besides that general quickness and decision which is necessary with wild animals, I noticed that he was always on the look-out for mischief, and always punished it before it came. Another point, he always attacked the offending part, and so met the evil in front; for instance, if one of his darlings curled a lip and showed a tooth, he hit him over the mouth that moment and nowhere else; if one elongated a claw, he hit him over the foot like lightning. He read the whole crew as I had learned to read Djek, and conquered their malice by means of that marvelous cowardice which they all show if they can see no sign of it in you.

There are no two ways with wild beasts. If there is a single white spot in your heart, leave them, for your life will be in danger every moment. If you can despise them, and keep the rod always in sight, they are your humble servants; nobody more so.

Our exhibition, successful at first, began to flag; so then the fertile brain of M. Huguet had to work. He proposed to his partner to stand a tiger and he would stand a bull, and "we will have a joint-stock fight like

the King of Oude." Michelet had his misgivings, but Huguet overruled him. That ingenious gentleman then printed bills advertising for a certain day a fight between a real Bengal tiger and a ferocious bull that had just gored a man to death. This done, he sent me round the villages to find and hire a bull. "Mind you get a mild one, or I shall have to pay for a hole in the tiger's leather." I found one which the owner consented to risk for so much money down, and the damage he should sustain from tiger to be valued independently by two farmers after the battle.

The morning of the fight Pippin and I went for our bull, and took him out of the yard toward Versailles; but when we had gone about two hundred yards, he became uneasy, looked round, sniffed about, and finally turned round spite of all our efforts, and paced home again. We remonstrated with the proprietor. "Oh," said he, "I forgot; he won't start without the wench." So the wench in question was sent for (his companion upon amatory excursions). She went with us, and launched us toward Versailles. This done, she returned home, and we marched on; but before we had gone a furlong Taurus showed symptoms of uneasiness; these increased, and at last he turned round and walked tranquilly home. We hung upon him, thrashed him, and bullied him, all to no purpose. His countenance was placid, but his soul resolved, and—he walked home, slowly, but inevitably; so, then, there was nothing for it but to let him have the wench all the way to the tiger, and she would not go to Versailles till she had put on some new finery—short waist, coal-scuttle bonnet, etc. More time lost with that; and, when we did arrive in the arena, the spectators were tired of waiting. The bull stood in the middle, confused and stupid. The tiger was in his cage in a corner; we gave him time to observe his prey, and then we opened the door of his cage.

A shiver ran through the audience (they were all seated in boxes looking down on the area).

A moment more, and the furious animal would spring upon his victim, and his fangs and claws sink deep into its neck, etc., etc. Vide books of travels.

One moment succeeded to another, and nothing occurred. The ferocious animal lay quiet in his cage, and showed no sign; so then we poked the ferocious animal. He snarled, but would not venture out. When this had lasted a long time, the spectators began to doubt his ferocity, and to goose the ferocious animal. So I got a red-hot iron and nagged him behind. He gave a yell of dismay, and went into the arena like a shot. He took no notice of the bull. All he thought of was escape from the horrors that surrounded him. Winged by terror, he gave a tremendous spring, and landed his fore-paws on the boxes, stuck fast, and glared in at the spectators. They rushed out yelling. He dug his hind-claws into the wood-work, and by slow and painful degrees clambered into the boxes. When he got in the young and active were gone home, and he ran down the stairs among the old people that could not get clear so quick as the rest. He was so frightened at the people that he skulked and hid himself in a corn-field, and the people were so frightened at him that they ran home and locked their street doors. So one coward made many.

They thought the poor wretch had *attacked* them, and the journal next day maintained this view of the transaction, and the town to this day believes it. We netted our striped coward with four shutters, and kicked him into his cage.

The bull went home with "the wench," and to this day his thick skull has never comprehended what the deuce he went to Versailles for.

This was how we competed with Oriental monarchs.

We marched southward, through Orleans, Tours, etc., to Bordeaux, and were pretty well received in all these places except at one small place whose name I forget. Here they hissed her out of the town at sight. It turn-

ed out she had been there before and pulverized a brush-maker, a popular man among them.

Soon after Bordeaux she had words with the lions. They, in their infernal conceit, thought themselves more attractive than Djek. It is vice versa, and by a long chalk, said Djek and Co. The parties growled a bit, then parted to meet no more in this world.

From Bordeaux we returned by another route to Paris; for we were only stalling it in the interval of our engagement as an actress with Franconi. We started one morning from — with light hearts, our faces turned toward the gay city, Elliot, Pippin, and I. Elliot and I walked by the side of the elephant, Pippin walking some forty yards in the rear. He never trusted himself nearer to her on a march.

We were plodding along in this order, when, all in a moment, without reason or warning of any sort, she spun round between us on one heel like a thing turning on a pivot, and strode back like lightning at Pippin. He screamed and ran; but, before he could take a dozen steps, she was upon him, and struck him down with her trunk and trampled upon him; she then wheeled round and trudged back as if she had merely stopped to brush off a fly or pick up a stone. After the first moment of stupefaction, both Elliot and I had run after her with all the speed we had; but so rapid was her movement, and so instantaneous the work of death, that we only met her on her return from her victim. I will not shock the reader by describing the state in which we found our poor comrade; but he was crushed to death. He never spoke, and I believe and trust he never felt any thing for the few minutes that breath lingered in his body. We kneeled down and raised him, and spoke to him, but he could not hear us. When Djek got her will of one of us, all our hope used to be to see the man die; and so it was with poor dear Pippin; mangled, and life impossible, we kneeled down and prayed to God for his death; and,

by Heaven's mercy, I think in about four minutes from the time he got his death-blow his spirit passed away, and our well-beloved comrade and friend was nothing now but a lump of clay on our hands.

We were some miles from any town or village, and did not know what to do, and how to take him to a resting-place. At last we were obliged to tie the body across the proboscis, and cover it as well as we could, and so we made his murderess carry him to the little town of La Palice—yes, La Palice. Here we stopped, and a sort of inquest was held, and M. Huguet attended and told the old story; said the man had been cruel to her, and she had put up with it as long as she could. Verdict—"Served him right;" and so we lied over our poor friend's murdered body, and buried him with many sighs in the little church-yard of La Palice, and then trudged on, sad and downcast, toward the gay capital.

CHAPTER XI.

I THINK a lesson is to be learned from this sad story. Too much fear is not prudence. Had poor Pippin walked with Elliot and me alongside the elephant, she dared not have attacked him. But through fear he kept forty yards in the rear, and she saw a chance to get him by himself; and, from my knowledge of her, I have little doubt she had meditated this attempt for months before she carried it out. Poor Pippin!

We arrived in Paris to play with Franconi. Now it happened to be inconvenient to Franconi to fulfill his engagement. He accordingly declined us. M. Huguet was angry—threatened legal proceedings. Franconi answered, "Where is Pippin?" Huguet shut up. Then Franconi followed suit; if hard pressed, he threatened to declare in open court that it was out of humanity alone he declined to fulfill his engagement. This stopped M.

Huguet's mouth altogether. He took a place on the Boulevard, and we showed her and her tricks at three prices, and did a rattling business. Before we had been a fortnight in Paris old Tom Elliot died at the Hospital Dubois, and I became her vizier at a salary of one hundred francs per week.

Having now the sole responsibility, I watched her as you would a powder-magazine lighted by gas. I let nobody but M. Huguet go near her in my absence. This gentleman continued to keep her sweet on him with lumps of sugar, and to act as her showman when she exhibited publicly.

One day we had a message from the Tuileries, and we got the place extra clean; and the king's children paid her a visit—a lot of little chaps. I did not know their names, but I suppose it was Prince Joinville, Aumale, and cetera. All I know is that while these little Louis Philipps were coaxing her, and feeding her, and cutting about her, and sliding down her, and I was telling them she was a duck, the perspiration was running down my back one moment and cold shivers the next, and I thanked Heaven devoutly when the young gents went back to their papa and mamma and no bones broken. The young gentlemen reported her affability and my lies to the king, and he engaged her to perform gratis in the Champs Elysées during the three days' fête. Fifteen hundred francs for this.

But Huguet was penny wise and pound foolish to agree, for it took her gloss off. Showed her gratis to half the city.

Among Djek's visitors came one day a pretty young lady, a nursery governess to some nobleman's children, whose name I forget, but he was English. The children were highly amused with Djek, and quite loth to go. The young lady, who had a smattering of English as I had of French, put several questions to me. I answered them more polite than usual on account of her being

pretty, and I used a privilege I had and gave her an order for free admission some other day. She came, with only one child, which luckily was one of those deeply meditative ones that occur but rarely, and only bring out a word every half hour; so mademoiselle and I had a chat, which I found so agreeable that I rather neglected the general public for her. I made it my business to learn where she aired the children, and, one vacant morning, dressed in the top of the fashion, I stood before her in the garden of the Tuileries. She gave a half start and a blush, and seemed very much struck with astonishment at this rencounter. She was a little less astonished next week when the same thing happened, but still she thought these coincidences remarkable, and said so. In short, I paid my addresses to Mademoiselle —. She was a charming brunette from Geneva, greatly my superior in education and station. I was perfectly conscious of this, and instantly made this calculation: "All the better for me if I can win her." But the reader knows my character by this time, and must have observed how large a portion of it effrontery forms. I wrote to her every day, sometimes in the French language—no, not in the French language, in French words. She sometimes answered in English words. She was very pretty and very interesting, and I fancied her. When a man is in love he can hardly see difficulties. I pressed her to marry me, and I believed she would consent. When I came to this point the young lady's gayety declined, and when I was painting her pictures of our conjugal happiness, she used to sigh instead of brightening at the picture. At last I pressed her so hard that she consented to write to Geneva and ask her parents' consent to our union. When the letter went I was in towering spirits. I was now in the zenith of my prosperity. The risks I had run with Djek were rewarded by a heavy salary and the post of honor near her, and, now that I was a little weary of roaming the world alone with an elephant, fate

had thrown in my way a charming companion who would cheer the weary road.

Dreams.

The old people at Geneva saw my position with another eye. "He is a servant liable to lose his place at any moment by any one of a hundred accidents, and his profession is a discreditable one: why, he is a show-man."

They told her all this in language so plain that she would never show me the letter. I was for defying their advice and authority, but she would not hear of it. I was forced to temporize. "In a month's time," said I to myself, "her scruples will melt away." But in less than a fortnight the order came for us to march into Flanders. I communicated this cruel order to my sweetheart. She turned pale, and made no secret of her attachment to me, and of the pain she felt at parting. Every evening before we left Paris I saw her, and implored her to trust herself to me and leave Paris as my wife. She used to smile at my pictures of wedded happiness, and cry the next minute because she dared not give herself and me that happiness; but, with all this, she was firm, and would not fly in her parents' face.

At last came a sad and bitter hour: hat in hand, as the saying is, I made a last desperate endeavor to persuade her to be mine, and not to let this parting take place at all. She was much agitated, but firm; and, the more I said, the firmer she became. So at last I grew frantic and reproached her. I called her a cold-hearted coquette, and we parted in anger and despair.

Away into the wide world again, not, as I used to start on these pilgrimages, with a stout heart and iron nerves, but cold, and weary, and worn out before the journey had begun. As we left Paris behind us I had but one feeling, that the best of life was at an end for me. My limbs took me along like machinery, but my heart was a lump of ice inside me, and I would have

thanked any man for knocking me on the head and ending the monotonous farce of my existence; ay, gentlefolks, even a poor mechanic can feel like this when the desire of his heart is balked forever.

Trudge! trudge! trudge! forever and ever.

Tramp! tramp! tramp! forever and ever.

A man gets faint and weary of it at last, and there comes a time when he pines for a hearth-stone, and a voice he can believe, a part, at least, of what it says, and a Sunday of some sort now and then; and my time was come to long for these things, and for a pretty and honest face about me to stand for the one bit of peace and the one bit of truth in my vagabond charlatan life.

I lost my appetite and sleep, and was very nearly losing heart altogether. My clothes hung about me like bags, I got so thin. It was my infernal occupation that cured me, after all. Djek gave me no time even for despair. The moment I became her sole guardian I had sworn on my knees she should never kill another man; judge whether I had to look sharp after her to keep the biped from perjury and the quadruped from murder. I slept with her—rose early—fed her—walked twenty miles with her, or exhibited her all day, sometimes did both, and at night rolled into the straw beside her too deadly tired to feel all my unhappiness; and so, after a while, time and toil blunted my sense of disappointment, and I trudged, and tramped, and praised Djek's moral qualities in the old routine. Only now and then, when I saw the country lads in France or Belgium going to church dressed in their best with their sweethearts, and I in prison in the stable with my four-legged hussy, waiting perhaps till dark to steal out and march to some fresh town, I used to feel as heavy as lead and as bitter as wormwood, and wish we were all dead together by way of a change.

A man needs a stout heart to go through the world at all, but most of all he needs it for a roving life; don't you believe any other, no matter who tells you.

With this brief notice of my feelings I pass over two months' travel. All through I spare the reader much, though I dare say he doesn't see it.

Sir, the very names of the places I have visited would fill an old-fashioned map of Europe.

Talk of Ulysses and his travels! he never saw the tenth part of what I have gone through.

I have walked with Djek farther than round the world during the eleven years I have trudged beside her: it is only 24,000 miles round the world.

After a year's pilgrimage we found ourselves at Doncheray, near Sedan.

Here we had an incident. Mons. Huguet was showing her to the public with the air of a prince and in his *Maréchal* of France costume, glittering with his theatrical cross of the Legion of Honor. He was not particular what he put on, so that it shone and looked well. He sent me for something connected with the performance—a pistol, I think. I had hardly ten steps to go, but during the time I was out of her sight I heard a man cry out and the elephant snort. I ran back hallooing as I came. As I ran in I found the elephant feeling for something in the straw with her foot, and the people rushing out of the doors in dismay. The moment she saw me she affected innocence, but trembled from head to foot. I drew out from the straw a thing you would have taken for a scarecrow or a bundle of rags. It was my master, M. Huguet, his glossy hat battered, his glossy coat stained and torn, and his arm broken in two places: a moment more and her foot would have been on him, and his soul crushed out of his body.

The people were surprised when they saw the furious snorting monster creep into a corner to escape a little fellow five feet four, who got to the old weapon, pitchfork, and drove it into every part of her but her head. She hid that in the corner the moment she saw blood in my eye.

We got poor M. Huguet to bed, and a doctor from the hospital to him, and a sorrowful time he had of it; and so, after standing good for twelve years, lump sugar fell to the ground. Pitchfork held good.

At night more than a hundred people came to see whether I was really so hardy as to sleep with this ferocious animal. To show them my sense of her, I lay down between her legs. On this she lifted her fore-feet singly, and with the utmost care and delicacy drew them back over my body.

As soon as M. Huguet's arm was set and doing well, he followed us (we had got into France by this time), and came in along with the public to admire us, and, to learn how the elephant stood affected toward him now, he cried out, in his most ingratiating way—in sugared tones—"Djek, my boy! Djek!" At this sound Djek raised a roar of the most infernal rage, and Huguet, who knew her real character well enough, though he pretended not to, comprehended that her heart was now set upon his extinction, malgré twelve years of lump sugar.

He sent for me, and with many expressions of friendship offered me the invaluable animal for thirty thousand francs. I declined her without thanks. "Then I shall have *the pleasure* of killing her to-morrow," said the Frenchman, "and what will become of your salary, mon pauvre garçon?"

In short, he had me in a fix, and used his power. I bought her of him for 20,000 francs, to be paid by installments. I gave him the first installment, a five-franc piece, and walked out of the wine-shop her sole proprietor.

The sense of property is pleasant, even when we have not paid for the article.

That night I formed my plans. There was no time to lose, because I had only a thousand francs in the world, and she ate a thousand francs a week, or nearly. I determined to try Germany—a poor country, but one which, being quite inland, could not have become callous to an

elephant, perhaps had never seen one. I shall never forget the fine, clear morning I started on my own account. The sun was just rising, the birds were tuning, and all manner of sweet smells came from the fields and the hedges. Djek seemed to step out more majestically than when she was another man's: my heart beat high. Eleven years ago I had started the meanest of her slaves. I had worked slowly, painfully, but steadily up, and now I was actually her lord and master, and half the world before me with the sun shining on it.

The first town I showed her at as mine was Verdun, and the next day I wrote to Mademoiselle — at Paris to tell her of the change in my fortunes. This was the only letter I had sent, for we parted bad friends. I received a kinder answer than the abrupt tone of my letter deserved. She congratulated me, and thanked me for remembering that whatever good fortune befell me must give her particular pleasure, and in the postscript she told me she was just about to leave Paris and return to her parents in Switzerland.

Djek crossed into Prussia, tramped that country, and penetrated into the heart of Germany. As I had hoped, she descended on this nation with all the charm of novelty, and used to clear the copper* out of a whole village. I remember early in this trip being at a country inn. I saw rustics, male and female, dressed in their Sunday clothes, coming over the hills from every side to one point. I thought there must be a fair or something. I asked the landlord what they were all coming for. He said, "Why, you, to be sure." They never saw such a thing in their lives, and never will again.

In fact, at one or two small places we were stopped by the authorities, who had heard that we carried more specie out of little towns than the circulating medium would bear.

* Germany is mostly made of copper. A bucketful of farthings was a common thing for me to have in my carriage.

In short, my first coup was successful. After six months' Germany, Bavaria, Prussia, etc., I returned to the Rhine at Strasbourg with eight thousand francs. During all this time she never hurt a soul, I watched her so fearfully close. So, being debarred from murder, she tried arson.

At a place in Bavaria her shed was suddenly observed to be in flames, and we saved her with difficulty.

The cause never transpired until now, but I saw directly how it had been done. I had unwarily left my coat in her way. The pockets were found emptied of all their contents, among which was a lucifer-box, fragments of which I found among the straw. She had played with this in her trunk, hammering it backward and forward against her knee, dropping the lighted matches into the straw, when they stung her, and very nearly roasted her own beef, the mischievous, uneasy devil.

My readers will not travel with an elephant, but business of some sort will fall to the lot of some of them soon or late, and, as charlatanry is the very soul of modern business, it may not be amiss to show how the humble artisan worked his elephant.

We never allowed ourselves to drop casually upon any place, like a shower of rain.

A man in bright livery, green and gold, mounted on a showy horse, used to ride into the town or village, and go round to all the inns, making loud inquiries about their means of accommodation for the elephant and her train. Four hours after him, the people being now a little agog, another green and gold man came in on a trained horse, and inquired for No. 1. As soon as he had found him, the two rode together round the town—No. 2 blowing a trumpet and proclaiming the elephant; the nations she had instructed in the wonders of nature; the kings she had amused; her grandeur, her intelligence, and, above all, her dove-like disposition.

This was allowed to ferment for some hours, and, when

expectation was at its height, the rest of the cavalcade used to heave in sight, Djek bringing up the rear. Arrived, I used to shut her in out of sight, and send all my men and horses round, parading, trumpeting, and pasting bills, so that at last the people were quite ripe for her, and then we went to work ; and thus the humble artisan and his elephant cut a greater dash than lions, and tigers, and mountebanks, and quacks, and drew more money.

Here is one of my programmes ; only I must remark that I picked up my French, where I picked up the sincerity it embodies, in the circuses, coulisses, and cabarets of French towns, so that I can patter French as fast as you like ; but, of course, I know no more about it than a pig—not to really know it.

Par permission de M. le Maire,
Le grand
ELEPHANT
du Roi de Siam,
Du Cirque Olympique Franconi.

Mlle. Djek,

Eléphant colossal, de onze pieds de hauteur et du poids de neuf mille liv., est le plus grand éléphant qui l'on ait vu en Europe.

M. H. B. Lott, naturaliste, pourvoyeur des ménageries des diverses cours d'Europe, actionnaire du Cirque Olympique et propriétaire de ce magnifique éléphant, qu'il a dressé au point de le présenter au public dans une pièce théâtrale qui fut créée pour Madlle. Djek il y a trois ans et demi, et qui a eu un si grand succès, sous le nom de l'Eléphant du Roi de Siam.

Le propriétaire, dans son voyage autour du monde, eut occasion d'acheter cet énorme quadrupède, qui le prit en affection, et qui, depuis onze ans qu'il le possède, ne s'est jamais démenti, se plaît à écouter son maître et exécute avec punctualité tout ce qu'il lui indique de faire.

Mlle. Djek, qui est dans toute la force de sa taille, a maintenant cent vingt-cinq ans; ellé a onze pieds de hauteur—et pèse neuf mille livres.

Sa consommation dans les vingt-quatre heures excède deux cent livres—quarante livres de pain pour son déjeuner; à midi, du son et de l'avoine; le soir, des pommes de terre ou du rizeuit; et la nuit du foin et de la paille.

C'est le même éléphant qui a combattu la lionne de M. Martin. Cette lionne en furie, qu'une imprudence fit sortir de sa cage, s'élance sur M. H. B. Lott qui se trouvait auprès de son éléphant; voyant le danger il se réfugie derrière une des jambes de ce bon animal, qui relève sa trômpe pour le protéger.* La lionne allait saisir M. H. B. Lott; l'éléphant la voit, rabat sa trompe, l'enveloppe, l'étouffe, la jette au loin, et l'aurait écrasée, si son maître ne lui eut dit de ne pas continuer.

Elle a ensuite allongé sa trompe, frappé du pied, criant et témoignant la satisfaction, qu'elle éprouvait d'avoir sauvé son ami d'une mort certaine, comme on a pu voir dans les journaux en février 1832.

Dans les cours des séances, on lui fera faire tous ses grands exercices qui sont dignes d'admiration, dont le grand nombre ne permet pas d'en donner l'analyse dans cette affiche, et qu'il faut voir pour l'en faire une idée juste.

Prix d'entrée: Premières	Secondes	Les
militaires et les enfants, moitié.		

I don't think but what my countrymen will understand every word of the above; but, as there are a great number of Frenchmen in London who will read this, I think it would look unkind not to translate it into English for their benefit.

* I am a dull fellow now, as you see. But you must allow I have been a man of imagination.

By permission of the Worshipful the Mayor,
the great

ELEPHANT
of the King of Siam,
from Franconi's Olympic Circus.

Mademoiselle Djek,

Colossal Elephant, eleven feet high and weighs nine thousand pounds. The largest elephant ever seen in Europe.

Mr. H. B. Lott, naturalist, who supplies the menageries of the various courts of Europe, shareholder in the Olympic Circus, and proprietor of this magnificent elephant, which he has trained to such a height that he will present her to the public in a dramatic piece which was written for her three years and a half ago, and had a great success under the title of the Elephant of the King of Siam.*

The proprietor, in his voyage round the globe, was fortunate enough to purchase this enormous quadruped, which became attached to him, and has been eleven years in his possession, during which time she has never once forgotten herself, and executes with obedient zeal whatever he bids her.

Mdlle. Djek has now arrived at her full growth, being one hundred and twenty-five years of age: she is eleven feet high, and weighs nine thousand pounds. Her daily consumption exceeds two hundred pounds. She takes forty pounds of bread for her breakfast, at noon barley and oats, in the evening potatoes or rice cooked, and at night hay and straw.

This is the same elephant that fought with Mr. Mar-

* My literary gent and me nearly had words over this bit. "Why, it is all nominative case," says he. "Well," says I, "you can't have too much of a good thing. Can you better it?" says I. "Better it?" says he; "why, I could not have come within a mile of it;" and he grinned. So I shut him up—for once.

tin's lioness. The lioness, whom the carelessness of the attendants allowed to escape from her cage, dashed furiously at Mr. H. B. Lott; fortunately, he was near his elephant, and, seeing the danger, took refuge behind one of the legs of that valuable animal. She raised her trunk in her master's defense. The lioness made to seize him; but the elephant lowered her trunk, seized the lioness, choked her, flung her a distance and would have crushed her to death if Mr. Lott had not commanded her to desist. After that she extended her trunk, stamped with her foot, trumpeting and showing her satisfaction at having saved her friend from certain death, full accounts of which are to be seen in the journals of February, 1832.

In the course of the exhibition she will go through all her exercises, which are wonderful, and so numerous that it is impossible to enumerate them in this bill: they must be seen to form a just idea of them.

Prices: First places	Second	Soldiers and
children half price.		

Djek and I used to make our bow to our audiences in the following fashion. I came on with her, and said, "Otez mon chapeau pour saluer;" then she used to take off my hat, wave it gracefully, and replace it on my head. She then proceeded to pick up twenty five-franc pieces one after another, and keep them piled in the extremity of her trunk. She also fired pistols, and swept her den with a broom in a most painstaking and ludicrous way.

But perhaps her best business in a real judge's eye was drinking a bottle of wine. The reader will better estimate this feat if he will fancy himself an elephant, and lay down the book now, and ask himself how he would do it, and read the following afterward.

The bottle (cork drawn) stood before her. She placed the finger and thumb of her proboscis on the mouth, made a vacuum by suction, and then, suddenly inverting the bottle, she received the contents in her trunk. The

difficulty now was to hold the bottle, which she would not have broken for a thousand pounds (my lady thought less of killing ten men than breaking a saucer), and yet not let the liquor run from her flesh-pipe. She rapidly shifted her hold to the centre of the bottle, and worked it by means of the wrinkles in her proboscis to the bend of it. Then she griped it, and at the same time curled round her trunk to a sloping position, and let the wine run down her throat. This done, she resumed the first position of her trunk, and worked the bottle back toward her finger, suddenly snapped hold of it by the neck, and handed it gracefully to me.

With this exception, it was not her public tricks that astonished me most. The principle of all these tricks is one. An animal is taught to lay hold of things at command, and to shift them from one place to another. You vary the thing to be laid hold of, but the act is the same. In her drama, which was so effective on the stage, Djek did nothing out of the way. She merely went through certain mechanical acts at a word of command from her keeper, who was unseen or unnoticed; *i. e.*, he was either at the wing in his fustian jacket, or on the stage with her in gimcrack and gold, as one of a lot of slaves or courtiers, or what not. Between ourselves, a single trick I have several times caught her doing on her own account proved more for her intelligence than all these. She used to put her eye to a keyhole. Ay, that she would, and so watch for hours to see what devil's trick she could do with impunity—she would see me out of the way, and then go to work. Where there was no keyhole I have seen her pick the knot out of a deal-board, and squint through the little hole she had thus made.

A dog comes next to an elephant, but he is not up to looking through a keyhole or a crack. He can think of nothing better than snuffing under the door.

At one place, being under a granary, she worked a hole in the ceiling no bigger than a thimble, and sucked down

sackfuls of grain before she was found out. Talk of the half-reasoning elephant: she seldom met a man that could match her in reasoning—to a bad end. Her weak points were her cruelty and cowardice, and by this latter Tom Elliot and I governed her with a rod of iron, vulgarly called a pitchfork. If a mouse pattered about the floor in her stable Djek used to tremble all over, and whine with terror till the little monster was gone. A ton shaken by an ounce.

I have seen her start back in dismay from a small feather floating in the air. If her heart had been as stout as her will to do mischief was strong, mankind must have risen to put her down.

Almost all you have ever heard about the full-grown elephant's character is a pack of falsities. They are your servants by fear, or they are your masters. Two years ago an elephant killed his keeper at Liverpool or Manchester, I forget which. Out came the "Times:" he had pronged him six weeks before. How well I knew the old lie; it seldom varies a syllable. That man died not because he had pronged the animal, but because he hadn't, or not enough.

Spare the pitchfork, spoil the elephant.

There is another animal people misconstrue just as bad: the hyena.

Terrible fierce animal, the hyena, says Buffon and Co., and the world echoes the chant.

Fierce, are they? You get a score of them together in a yard, and you shall see me walk into the lot with nothing but a switch, and them try to get between the brick and the mortar with the funk—that is how fierce they are; and they are not only cowardly, but innocent, and affectionate into the bargain, is the fierce hyena of Buffon and Co.; but, indeed, wild animals are sadly misunderstood; it is pitiable; and those that have the best character deserve it less than those that have the worst.

In one German town I met with something I should

like to tell the sporting gents, for I don't think there is many that ever fell in with such a thing. But it is an old saying that what does happen has happened before, and may again, so I tell this to put them on their guard, especially in Germany. Well, it was a good town for business, and we staid several days; but before we had been there many hours my horses turned queer. Restless they were, and uneasy. Sweated of their own accord. Stamped eternally. One, in particular, began to lose flesh. We examined the hay. It seemed particularly good, and the oats not amiss. Called the landlord in, and asked him if he could account for it. He stands looking at them; this one, called Dick, was all in a lather. "Well, I think I know now," said he; "they are bewitched. You see there is an old woman in the next street that bewitches cattle, and she rides on your horses' backs all night, you may take your oath." Then he tells us a lot of stories, whose cow died after giving this old wench a rough word, and how she had been often seen to go across the meadows in the shape of a hare. "She has a spite against me, the old sorceress," says he. "She has been at them; you had better send for the pastor." "Go for the farrier, Jem," says I. So we had in the farrier. He sat on the bin and smoked his pipe in dead silence, looking at them. "They seem a little fidgety," says he, after about half an hour. So I turned *him* out of the stable. And I was in two minds about punching his head, I was. "Send for the veterinary surgeon, No. 1." He came. "They have got some disorder," says he, "that is plain; nostrils are clear, too. Let me see them eat." They took their food pretty well. Then he asked where we came from last. I told him. "Well," said he, cheerfully, "this is a murrain, I think. In this country we do invent a new murrain about every twenty years. We are about due now." He spoke English, this one—quite a fine gentleman. One of the grooms put in, "I think the water is poisoned." "Anyway,"

says another, "Dick will die if we stay here." So then they both pressed me to leave the town. "You know, governor, we can't afford to lose the horses." Now I was clearing ten pounds a day in the place, and all expenses paid; so I looked blank. So did the veterinary. "I wouldn't go," says he; "wait a day or two; then the disease will declare itself, and we shall know what we are doing." You see, gents, he did not relish my taking a murrain out of his town; he was a veterinary. "Whatever it is," says he, "you brought it with you." "Well, now," said I, "my opinion is I found it here. Did you notice any thing at the last place, Nick?" "No:" the grooms both bore me out. "Oh!" says the vet., "you can't go by that: it had not declared itself." Well, if you will believe me (I often laugh when I think of it), it was not two minutes after he said that that it did declare itself. It was Sunday morning, and Nick had got a clean shirt on. Nick was currying the very horse called Dick, when all of a sudden the sleeve of his white shirt looked dirty. "What now?" cries he, and comes to the light. "I do believe it is vermin," says he, "and if it is they are eaten up with it." "Vermin? What vermin can that be?" said I; "have we invented a new vermin too?" They were no bigger than pin's points—looked like dust on his shirt. "What do you say, sir—is it vermin?" "Not a doubt of it," says the vet. "These are poultry-lice, unless I am mistaken. Have you any hens any where near?" Both the grooms burst out, "Hens? why there are full a hundred up in the hay-loft." So that was the murrain. The hens had been tumbling in the hay; the hay came down to the rack all alive with their vermin; and the vermin were eating the horses. We stopped that supply of hay; and what with currying, and washing with a solut. the vet. gave us, we cured that murrain—chicken-pox, if any. We had a little scene at going away from this place. Landlord had agreed to charge nothing for the use of stabling, we spent so much

in other ways with him. In spite of that, he put it down at the foot of the list. I would not pay. "You must." "I won't." "Then you shan't go till you do;" and with that he and his servants closed the great gates. The yard was entered by two great double doors like barn doors, secured outside by a stout beam. So there he had us fast. It got wind, and there was the whole population hooting outside, three thousand strong. Then it was, "Come, don't be a fool."

"Don't you be a fool."

"Stand clear," said I to the man; "we will alter our usual line of march this time; I'll take Djek from the rear to the front." So they all formed behind me and Djek, two carriages, and six horses, all in order. "Now," said I, "landlord, you have had your joke, open the door, and let us part friends; we have been with you a week, you know, and you have had one profit out of us, and another out of the townsfolk we brought to your bar. Open the door."

"Pay me my bill, and I'll open," says he. "If I turned away one traveler from my stable for you I've turned away twenty."

"A bargain is a bargain. Will you open before she knocks your door into toothpicks?"

"Oh! I'll risk my door if you'll risk your beast. No, I won't open till I am paid."

"Once, will you open?"

"No."

"Twice, will you open? Thrice?"

"No."

"Djek—Go!"

She walked lazily at the door, as if she did not see it. The moment she touched it both doors were in the road; the beam was in half in the road. Most times one thing stands, another goes; here it all went bodily on all sides like paper on a windy day, and the people went fastest of all. There was the yell of a multitude under our noses,

then an empty street under our eyes. We marched on calm, majestic, and unruffled beneath the silent night.

Doors and bolts, indeed, to a lady that had stepped through a brick wall before that day—an English brick wall.

CHAPTER XII.

FROM Strasbourg I determined to go into Switzerland; above all, to Geneva. I could not help it. In due course of time and travel I arrived near Geneva, and sent forward my green and gold avant-couriers; but, alas! they returned with the doleful news that elephants were not admitted into that ancient city. The last elephant that had been there had done mischief, and, at the request of its proprietor, Madlle. Garnier, a young lady whose conscience smote her, for she had another elephant that killed one or two people in Venice, was publicly executed in the fortress.*

Fortunately (as I then thought), I had provided myself with testimonials from the mayor and governors of some score of towns through which we had passed. I produced these, and made friends in the town, particularly with a Dr. Mayo. At last we were admitted. Djek was proved a dove by such overpowering testimony. I had now paid M. Huguet six thousand francs and found myself possessed of five thousand more. Business was very good in Geneva. Djek was very popular. Her intelligence and amiability became a by-word. I had but one bitter disappointment, though. Madlle. — never came to see us, and I was too sulky and too busy to hunt for her. Besides, I said to myself, "All the world can find me, and if she cared a button for me she would come to light." I tried to turn it off with the old song:

* They gave this elephant an ounce of prussic acid and an ounce of arsenic; neither of these sedatives producing any effect, they fired a cannon ball through her neck.

“ Now get ye gone, ye scornful dame ;
If you are proud, I'll be the same.
I make no doubt that I shall find
As pretty a girl unto my mind.”

Behold me now at the climax of prosperity, dressed like a gentleman, driving a pair of horses, proprietor of a whole cavalcade and of an elephant, and after clearing all expenses, making at the rate of full £600 per annum. There was a certain clergyman of the place used to visit us about every day, and bring her cakes and things to eat, till he got quite fond of her, and believed that she returned his affection. I used to beg him not to go so close to her. On this, his answer was, “ Why, you say she is harmless as a chicken ;” so then I had no more to say. Well, one unlucky day I turned my back for a moment ; before I could get back there were the old sounds, a snort of rage, and a cry of terror, and there was the poor minister in her trunk. At sight of me she dropped him, but two of his ribs were broken, and he was quite insensible, and the people rushed out in terror. We raised the clergyman and carried him home, and in half an hour a mob was before the door, and stones as big as your fists thrown in at the windows : this, however, was stopped by the authorities. But the next day my lady was arrested and walked off to the fortress, and there confined. I remonstrated, expostulated—in vain. I had now to feed her and no return from her : ruin stared me in the face. So I went to law with the authorities. Law is slow, and Djek was eating all the time. Ruin looked nearer still. The law ate my green and gold servants and horses, and still Djek remained in quod. Then I refused to feed her any longer, and her expenses fell upon the town. Her appetite and their poverty soon brought matters to a climax. They held a sort of municipal tribunal, and tried her for an attempt at homicide. I got counsel to defend her, for I distrusted my own temper and French.

I can't remember half the fine things he said, but there was one piece of common sense I do remember. He said, "The animal, I believe, is unconscious of her great strength, and has committed a fatal error rather than a crime; still, if you think she is liable to make such errors, let her die rather than kill men. But how do you reconcile to your consciences to punish her proprietor, to rob him of his subsistence? *He* has committed no crime, *he* has been guilty of no want of caution. If, therefore, you take upon yourselves to punish the brute, be honest! buy her of the man first, and then assert your sublime office—destroy an animal that has offended morality. But a city should be above wronging or robbing an individual." When he sat down I thought my homicide was safe, for I knew Geneva could not afford to buy an elephant without it was out of a Noah's ark.

But up gets an orator on the other side and attacked me; accused me of false representations, of calling a demon a duck. "We have certain information from France that this elephant has been always wounding and killing men up and down Europe these twenty years. Mons. Loett knew this by universal report, and by being an eyewitness of more than one man's destruction." Here there was a sensation, I can tell you. "He has, therefore, forfeited all claims to consideration." Then he thundered out, "Let no man claim to be wiser than Holy Writ; there we are told that a lie is a crime of the very deepest dye, and here we see how for years falsehood has been murder." Then I mind he took just the opposite line to my defender. Says he, "If I hesitate for a moment, it is not for the man's sake, but for the brute's; but I do not hesitate. I could wish so majestic a creature might be spared for our instruction," says he, "that so wonderful a specimen of the Creator's skill might still walk the earth; but reason, and justice, and humanity say 'No.' There is an animal far smaller, yet ten times more important, for he has a soul; and this, the king of

all the animals, is not safe while she lives; therefore she ought to die. Weaker far than her in his individual strength, he is a thousand times stronger by combination and science—therefore she will die.”

When this infernal chatter-box shut up, my heart sunk into my shoes. He was a prig, but an eloquent one, and he walked into Djek and me till we were not worth half an hour’s purchase.

For all that, the council did not come to a decision on the spot, and I believe that if Djek had but been content to kill the laity as heretofore, we should have scraped through with a fine; but the fool must go and tear black cloth, and dig her own grave.

Two days after the trial, out came the sentence—Death!

With that modesty and good feeling which belongs to most foreign governments, they directed me to execute their sentence.

My answer came in English. “I’ll see you d—d, and double d—d first, and then I won’t.”

Meantime Huguet was persecuting poor heart-sick me for the remainder of her purchase-money, and, what with the delay, the expenses, and the anxiety, I was so down and so at the end of my wits and my patience that her sentence fell on me like a blow on a chap that is benumbed—produced less effect upon me at the time than it does when I think of it now.

Well—curse them!—one fine morning they ran a cannon up to the gate, loaded it, and bade me call the elephant, and bring her into a favorable position for being shot. I refused point blank in English as before. They threatened me for my contumacy. I answered they might shoot me if they liked, but I would not be the one to destroy my own livelihood.

So they had to watch their opportunity.

It was not long of coming.

She began to walk about, and presently the poor fool

marched right up to the cannon's mouth and squinted down it. Then she turned, and at last she crossed right before it. The gunner took the opportunity, applied his linstock, and fired. There was a great tongue of flame and a cloud of smoke, and through the smoke something as big as a house was seen to go down: the very earth trembled at the shock.

The smoke cleared in a moment, and there lay Djek. She never moved. The round shot went clean through her body, and struck the opposite wall with great force. It was wonderful and sad to see so huge a creature robbed of her days in a moment by a spark. There she lay—poor Djek.

In one moment I forgot all her faults. She was an old companion of mine in many a wet day and dreary night. She was reputation to me and a clear six hundred a year; and then she was so clever! We shall never see her like again; and there she lay. I mourned over her, right or wrong, and have never been the same man since that shot was fired.

The butchery done, I was informed by the municipal authorities that the carcass was considered, upon the whole, to be my property. The next moment I had two hundred applications for elephant steaks from the pinch-gut natives, who, I believe, knew gravy by tradition and romances that had come all the way from Paris. Knives and scales went to work, and, with the tears running down my cheeks, I sold her beef at four sous per pound for about £40 sterling.

This done, all my occupation was gone. Geneva was no place for me, and as the worthy Huguet, whose life I had saved, threatened to arrest me, I determined to go back to England and handicraft. Two days after Djek's death I was hanging sorrowfully over the bridge, when some one drew near to me and said, in a low voice, Mons. Loett. I had no need to look up. I knew the voice; it was my lost sweetheart. She spoke very kindly, blush-

ed, and welcomed me to her native country. She did more; she told me she lived five miles from Geneva, and invited me to visit her mother. She took occasion to let me know that her father was dead: "My mother refuses me nothing," she added, with another blush. This was all like a dream to me. The next day I visited her and her mother, and was cordially received; in short, it was made clear to me that my misfortune had endeared me to this gem of a girl instead of repelling her. An uncle, too, had died, and left her three hundred pounds, and this made her bolder still; and she did not conceal her regard for me. She told me she had seen me once in Geneva driving two showy horses in a carriage and looking like a nobleman, and so had hesitated to claim the acquaintance; but, hearing the elephant's execution, and guessing that I could no longer be on the high road to fortune, she had obeyed her heart, and been the first to remind me I had once esteemed her.

In short, a Pearl.

I made her a very bad return for so much goodness. I went and married her. We then compounded with Huguet for three thousand francs, and sailed for England to begin the world again.

The moment I got to London I made for the Seven Dials to see my friend Paley.

On the way I met a mutual acquaintance; told him where I was going—red hot.

He shook his head and said nothing.

A chill came over me. If you had stuck a knife in me I shouldn't have bled. I gasped out some sort of inquiry.

"Why, you know he was not a young man," says he; and he looked down.

That was enough for such an unlucky one as me. I began to cry directly. "Don't ye take on," says he. "Old man died happy. Come home with me; my wife will tell you more about it than I can."

I was loath to go; but he persuaded me. His wife told me the old gentleman spoke of me to the last, and had my letters read out, and boasted of my success.

"Didn't I tell you he would rise?" he used to say; and then, it seems, he made much of some little presents I had sent him from Paris, and them such trifles compared with what I owed him: "Doesn't forget old friends now he is at the top of the tree;" and then burst out praising me, by all accounts.

So, then, it was a little bit of comfort to think he had died while I was prosperous, and that my disappointment had never reached his warm and feeling heart.

A workman has little time to grieve outwardly; he must dry his eyes quickly, let his heart be ever so sad, or he'll look queer when Saturday night comes. You can't make a workmanlike joint with the tear in your eye; one half the joiners can't do it with their glasses on. And I was a workman once more; I had to end as I began.

I returned to the violin trade, and, by a very keen attention to its mysteries, I made progress, and having a foreign connection, I imported and sold to English dealers, as well as made, varnished, and doctored violins. But soon the trade, through foreign competition, declined to a desperate state. I did not despair, but to eke out, I set my wife up in a china and curiosity shop in Wardour Street, and worked at my own craft in the back parlor. I had no sooner done this than the writers all made it their business to sneer at Wardour Street, and now nobody dares buy in that street; so, since I began this tale, we have closed the shop—it only wasted their time—they are much better out walking, and getting fresh air, at least, for their trouble. I attend sales, and never lose a chance of turning a penny; at home I make, and mend, and doctor fiddles; I carve wood; I clean pictures and gild frames; I cut out fruit and flowers in leather; I teach ladies and gentlemen to gild at so much a lesson; and by these and a score more of little petty arts I just keep the pot boiling.

I am, as I have been all my life, sober, watchful, enterprising, energetic, and unlucky.

In early life I played for a great stake—affluence.

I think I may say I displayed in the service of Djek some of those qualities by which, unless books are false, men have won campaigns and battles, and reaped fortunes and reputations: result in my case, a cannon shot fired in a dirty little village calling itself a city, in a country that Yorkshire could eat up and spit out again, after all the great kingdoms and repubs. had admired her and forgiven her her one defect—a tongue of fire—a puff of smoke—and all the perils, labor, courage, and perseverance of eleven years blown away like dust to the four winds of heaven.

I am now playing for a smaller stake; but I am now, as usual, playing my very best. I am bending all my experience of work and trade, all my sobriety, activity, energy, and care, all my cunning of eye and hand, to one end—not to die in the work-house.

Ladies and gentlemen, the workman has said his say, and I hope the company have been amused.

THE END.

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